

AN INFORMATORY
VINDICATION
OF A

Poor, wasted, misrepresented Remnant of
the suffering, Anti-popish, Anti-prela-
tick, Anti-erastian, Anti-sectarian, true
Presbyterian Church of CHRIST in
Scotland.

United together in a general Correspondence.

By way of Reply to various Accusations, in Let-
ters, Informations and Conferences given forth
against them.

Written at the *Leadbills* in the Year 1687, conjunctly by
Mr. JAMES RENWICK and Mr. ALEXANDER
SHIELLS Author of the *Hind let loose.*



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1607 / 861.

A VINDICATION of the United
Societies of some Presbyterians in *Scotland*, who contend against the Defections of the Time.

The INTRODUCTION.

Containing a brief Deduction of the Series and Tract of some signal Steps of our Church's Defection, which, from Time to Time, some have witnessed against.

One that ever heard of the Church of *Scotland*, can be altogether ignorant, how, when the Lord was graciously pleased to confer upon this Land, the inestimable Benefit of the pure and clear shining Light of the Gospel, and to advance the *Reformation*, therein begun, to a very high degree, from mere *Heathenism*, even to the Extirpation of *Popery*, *Prelacy* and *Estrastianism* (which our Church hath had chiefly to wrestle against) and the Abjuration of all Heretical and Sectarian Errors, whether in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline or Government) that then all Ranks of the Land were brought into holy and solemn Covenants with God, the Church did enjoy her Power and Privileges: then, when our Ministers were clothed with Righteousness and Salvation, their Faithfulness to God, and Zeal against Sin, and all Lukewarmness in the Lord's Cause, were so much seen and shown, that Ministers, for their not applying their Doctrine against the Corruptions of the Times, were to be censured; and if obstinate, were to be deposed, according to that Act of the *General Assembly*, Aug. 3. 1648. Sess. 26. And likewise, *Compliers with the publick Enemies of his Church and Kingdom*, were, according to the degree of their Offence, to be rebuked and censured, by that Act of the *General*

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neral Assembly, June 17. 1646. Sess. 14. In those Days the Work of the Lord prospered, his Gospel flourished, and Iniquity was made to stop her mouth: our Church was glorious to all Beholders, and terrible to her Enemies, *as an Army with Banners: The Lord delighted in us,* and *our Land was married unto him: Salvation was written upon our Walls, and Praise upon our Gates.* But alas! we did quickly turn away from following the Lord, forgetting what great and eminent Privileges he hath bestowed upon us; how he had subdued our Enemies under us, and made them to yield; and prospered us in what we did put our hands unto: we did, alas! soon fall from our first Love, the Edge of our Zeal became blunted, and our Eyes were darkned that we could not see: And so we have gone further astray, from one degree to another, until we have brought ourselves into such a Misery of Dissolution and Desolation, Division and Confusion, Reproach and Contempt, that our Case now is as deplorable and despicable, as ever it was formerly admired and envied.

Wherefore, to make it the more clearly appear, whence it is, that now our manifold Breaches are so wide, Alienation of Spirits so heightened, various and contrary Informations so flying abroad, and we reduced to such a Paucity: we shall here premise a brief Deduction *in short*, of the Series and Tract of some signal Steps of our Church's Defection; shewing also, notwithstanding thereof, how the Lord hath continued and conveyed down the Testimony to the Reformation; although to us it is matter of Grief and Sorrow, to discover our Mother's Nakedness, which is also our own Shame. But the clearing of the Testimony, and the Vindication of Truth doth necessitate us thereunto.

While our Church was enjoying her Privileges, and was terrible to her Adversaries, a great part, both of the Church and State, fell upon *publick Resolutions*, whereby known Malignants, and Men disaffected to the Work and People of God were admitted to Places of Power and Trust, both in Judicatories and Armies, which notwithstanding was faithfully protested and contended against by several Ministers and Professors of all Ranks

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at that time: As also the *Toleration of Seditaries* in *Crom-*
wel's Time, and even his Usurpation was witnessed a-
 gainst by some. But as it was our Sin, first and last, to
 meddle with *Charles II.* while he gave all alongst such
 clear Evidences of his being an Enemy to the Cause of
 God; so we found the bitter Effects of it, in that, when
 he was restored again, he did quickly forget all his
 Oaths and Vows to the Most High (wherein he had been,
 as some did clearly see by many Discoveries a mocking
 and dissembling Hypocrite) and did, at one Blow, cut off
 the Neck of our noble Constitution of Church and State,
 and re-introduce abjured *Prelacy*, which many Ministers
 did embrace; while others left their Charges at his Com-
 mand, even without so much as a joint and Formal Prote-
 station, entered against that Heaven-daring act of Ty-
 ranny, except that some were found witnessing against it
 in their singular Capacities for themselves. And when
 Congregations were so destitute of Faithful Pastors,
 the most part, both of Ministers and Professors, did
 Countenance *Prelacy*, in hearing of *Hireling Intruders*. Yea,
 as if no Testimony had been required in this Point,
 very few continued Preaching the Gospel as they had
 Opportunity. Howbeit, as the Lord always had, and
 will have some Witnesses, against such heinous Indignities;
 So he did Stir up a Company, both of Ministers and
 Professors, who did appear at *Pentland*, in the Year 1666,
 And there did bear Testimony to the Covenanted Work of
 Reformation, to the shedding of their Blood both in Fields
 and Scaffolds; but were concurred with, and counte-
 nanced by few, in Respect of those who were obliged.
 Also, after that Breach was made upon the LORD's
 Camps, the most part of Ministers became *Sinfully Si-*
lent, forbearing to Encourage, Warn, and teach People,
 by the Preached Gospel. But some, notwithstanding
 of the then ominous and badly presaging Face of Affairs,
 setting the Trumpet to their Mouth, ventured to give a
 certain Sound, and to go forth Hero-like, to Display the
 Banner of Christ's Blessed Gospel; who, for their so
 doing, were censured by their Brethren, in a Meeting at
Edinburgh. Then Enemies, seeing that by their Cruel-
 ty they could not prevail; as, at the overturning of the

Work of Reformation, they had brought upon the Stage, that Monster of a Christ-degrading and dethroning *Supremacy*, and by Law establish'd it upon the Usurper (which also pass'd without a joint and publick Testimony) so they began now to exert that Usurped Power, and to work by ensnaring and destroying Policy. And knowing that nothing would more fortify it, than Ministers their Homologating and acknowledging it, therefore they offered that first *Indulgence*, a Court contriv'd Licence, bounded with so many Restrictions and Instructions, flowing forth from that Idol of Jealousie, the foresaid Supremacy; of set purpose, to divide Zion's Builders, according to the *Matchiavellian* Principle, *divide and then Command*: Which many embraced; like unto the silly *Trojans*, beguiled by another deceitful *Sinon*, to bring the Wooden Horse through their own walls, already broken down with their own hands, to their own Destruction: Many others gaped after it who could not enjoy it: And many pleaded for the countenancing of it when embraced. And as it had few who oppos'd it at first, so these that afterwards contended against it as a Defection, how were they suspected, reproached, and contradicted? And some of them in sundry Presbyteries Censured and Rebuked? As namely Mr. *Cameron*, at *Sundorwall*, in the Paroch of *Dunscore*, in *Nithsdale*, and in *Edinburgh*; and others else where. Yet notwithstanding of the lukewarmness and indifferency of many, the Lord stirr'd up a handful to publish the Testimony at *Rutherglen*; May 29, 1679, bearing witness against the Sacrilegious *Supremacy*, the *Declaration* Condemning our Covenants, the act for keeping the 29th. of May as an Holy *Anniversary* day of Thanksgiving for the upsetting of the Tyrant, and against other Nefarious Acts of Parliament, and all prejudices done to the Interest of Christ in the Land. And for Confirmation of their Testimony, they did burn the foresaid Acts, according as the Adversary had burnt our Holy Covenants, and did extinguish the Bonfires upon the same Anniversary day. Nevertheless, when the Lord's People did appear at *Bothwell* the same year to recover the Churches due Privileges, and Peoples Liberties, many Ministers and Professors did plead for
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taking in the Tyrants Interest into the Declaration of that Army, thereby mis-stating the Quarrel, to the Offence of many; and opposed the inserting of the *Indulgence* among the steps of our Defection. Likewise the Lord making us then to fall before our Enemies, for our sins, and because we refused to return, several Ministers accepted of the Adversaries *Indemnity*, in terms that inferred a condemning of themselves, though no Transgression was committed. And when the Triumphant Enemies were erecting Trophies of Victory after *Boswell* defeat, (Setting up the Heads of the Renown'd Martyrs, Mr. *Kid*, and Mr. *King*, to witness, not only for Religion and Liberty, against the Destroyers of both, but also against the unfaithfulness of their Brethren in the Ministry,) and insulting over the Captives of the LORD's People, and imposing an *Ensnaring Bond of Peace*, which did imply a plain betraying of the Cause, and condemning of all that had been done for promoting the Work of Reformation; many Ministers were silent, and refused to give their Advice; and some were not ashamed to persuade these Prisoners to put forth their hand to that Iniquity: Many also voted, in that so called Assembly, for embracing the last *Indulgence* with the *Cautionary Bond*, (which was no better, if not worse, than the former) at least approved of, and consented unto that Deed: Yea, many, from that time, did forbear Preaching in the open Fields, but kept within houses, or near to houses, in Homologating of the Tyrants Orders, or at least that the Rigour of the Law might not be execute against them, while they went so near the Borders of Obedience. But this did not continue long, for the Enemies soon deprived them of this pretended Liberty. Howbeit, the Lord had always some, both of Ministers and Professors, to bear Testimony against these publick Sins and heinous Defections; and even in the midst of this general Yielding to the foresaid Indulgence, there were sundry Ministers who did not give a formal Consent to the Embracement of it: though 'tis true, as they were few who dissented therefrom, so they were far fewer who resolutely opposed the same. Yea, when Mr. *Richard Cameron* came

from *Holland*, before his going to the publick Work, he went to some Ministers, desiring their Concurrence with him, in keeping up the Testimony in the Fields, according to the former manner which was followed before *Bothwell*, by many Ministers, wherein they were much countenanced of the Lord ; but after his waiting some time upon the same, was denied thereof. However, he went forth, in great Hazard, and against much Opposition, as a valiant and heroick Contender for all the Prerogatives of his Master, wherein he was signally owned of the Lord ; and continued so, until he sealed that noble and necessary Testimony with his Blood, shed in the open Fields. Also, how few were not displeased with him ? and any else concurring in upholding the Standard of the Gospel, in that faithful manner, so much called for, especially at that Time ; that it might be a Witness and Testimony, both against the Adversaries Encroachings, and also against the shameful and sinful Yieldings of the most part of Ministers and Professors thereunto. Further, when the Declaration was published at *Sanquhar*, *June 22. 1680.* many of the Ministers did condemn it, and few, concurring with the Publishers and Consenters, did appear publicly for it, even because of its disowning and disclaiming the Tyrant's Interest: Many accounting such as died upon that head, to have laid down their Lives upon insufficient Grounds, which notwithstanding from that Time downward, the Lord hath honoured many Martyrs to seal with their Blood, greatly countenancing them therein. This Testimony did more and more side us, and set us alone ; for, from thenceforth, severals, who had not formerly so openly opposed, began to express themselves against that Handful, and Action. However, the Testimony being thus stated against the acknowledging of, and complying with the Tyranny then raging, and any way strengthening the Hands of the persecuring Party ; it pleased the holy and wise God, for our further Trial, and his own Glory, to deprive us of these Worthies, who had so stated it, and did so valiantly vindicate it, and at their Death did stoutly seal it with their Blood at *Ayrs Moss* ; many there being murdered, and others martyred afterwards ;

wards; particularly Mr. *Hackston*, who, as he had the Honour of being Protomartyr against Tyranny, and of a most positive declining his Murderers Pretence unto Authority; so had the Grace and Glory of the Lord's Assistance and Acceptance in his Sufferings, as signal, at the barbarous Severity of his Butchers was every way singular.

After which Time, none of our Ministers did concur with us in that part of our Testimony, (except famous and faithful Mr. *Donald Cargil*) which made our Case very deplorable, and yet by the most part little regarded or pitied, for any Evidences that we experienced of their Sympathy. Especially after the Death of the never to be forgotten Martyr Mr. *Donald Cargil*, sad was the case of the Land for some space of Time: For now the abominable and damnable Errors of *John Gib* had been discovered, who, first pretending to outstrip others in a hot and vigorous Zeal against all the then current Corruptions of the Time, did draw some poor well-meaning People, stumbled especially at Ministers Defections, into a Consortship with himself, in his delirious Delusions, though not all of them alike to the full length of his Sorceries and Blasphemies; neither did his Followers increase to such a Number as was then feared and reported, being within Thirty, and most part Women; nor yet could have access to propagate his Heresy in the Western Shires, where most of our Friends had their Residence, (though they and we both have been most iniquiously reproached herewith) being discovered by many, particularly by Mr. *Cargil*, whose Ministry he rejected: Yet his foresaid Followers did go a great way with him, (as they have with Remorse repented since in their Confessions, being through Mercy reclaimed, partly by Mr. *Cargil's* writing to them, and partly by their own Discoveries of him) and did not forsake him, till after all his execrable cursing of the Ministers, and others not of his Way. Being incarcerate, he put forth a blasphemous Paper, *not only condemning all the Work of Reformation, but also the English Bible, in the Form as it is now extant, as a human Invention, and containing many other Abominations; in all which he pleased the Duke of York, and* received

received extraordinary Favours from him. And thereafter being freely let go, he proceeded to that Height of Profanity and Contempt of God, that *he burnt the Bible*, and belched forth *many other Blasphemies*, which would be offensive to Christian Ears to rehearse. Again, in some Process of Time, *James Russel* did discover some unwarrantable Excesses, pressing indifferent Things as the most necessary Duties, *as about naming the Days of the Week, and Months of the Year, &c.*) and otherwise imposing upon Mens Consciences; whereupon he and we parted: After which he branded and aspersed us with false Charges, as if *we had turned aside to gross Defections, and palliated and plaistered the Corruptions of our Time; consorting in this with some few, and even with some who had given little satisfying Resentment of their former Extravagancies with Gib, being by them applauded and strengthened in his foresaid Excesses.* In the mean while, there was no publick Testimony by Preaching kept up, by reason of that sad Sleep of dark and deep Silence into which Ministers had fallen, which occasioned very lamentable Confusions; so that one could not understand the Language of another, the Face of Affairs being so obscured, and matters looking so hopeles and helpless like. Yet it pleased the Lord, by a poor contemptible Handful, to convey down the Testimony, by publishing another Declaration at *Lanerk*, *January 12. 1682.* confirming the Preceeding at *Sanquhar*, in its disowning the Interest of the Tyrant, and bearing Testimony against the immediately foregoing pretended Parliament, where *James Duke of York* did preside as Commissioner; and in particular against the abominable *Test*, framed by them. But as the former was much condemned, so also this, even because of its coming from us, and confirming *Sanquhar* Declaration, as said is. From thenceforth many did more plainly and positively oppose us, as if we had turned aside to some erroneous and unhappy Course. And thus they proceeded to inform against us, both at Home and Abroad, as such, without trying whether or not we maintained such things as were laid to our charge, and taking pains to admonish us, as became Watchmen, especially when they apprehended People to be drawn aside

aside with Errors : For surely it was never yet heard,
 that an erring People (if we had been as they inform'd
 against us) were reclaim'd by such Means as they used.
 However, the Lord (*who is not wanting to provide Means
 for the strengthening and encouraging of his People*) even
 then, *when we were few in Number*, without the Concur-
 rence of Pastors, and scattered abroad, not well knowing
 the Minds of one another, nor who concurred with us
 through the Land, in the foresaid part of our Testimony,
 did make some instrumental (immediately before the
 Publication of *Lanerk Declaration*) to gather us together
 in a general Correspondence, which we have hitherto, by
 the Lord's Providence, kept up, both through the Shires
 severally, and all the Shires conjunctly, where such as
 owned our Testimony did reside ; whereby we attained
 to better understanding of one another, and were put in
 capacity to contribute more to our mutual Advantage.
 Whence it came to pass, that being thus jointly and har-
 moniously knit together, we began, after the Publica-
 tion of the foresaid Declaration at *Lanerk*, in the next
 general Meeting or Correspondence, *to deliberate about
 some Method, whereby our broken and low Case might be re-
 presented and made known to Strangers*, (not that we might
 carry on a Faction or Separation from the *Scottish true
 Presbyterian Church*, as we were misrepresented, but)
that we might declare our Adherenceto the Principles thereof.
 Hereupon it was resolved and thought fit, That some of
 our Number should be particularly sent both to the other
Covenanted and Foreign Churches, to make known our bro-
 ken and low Case to them, to wipe off Reproaches that
 were cast upon us, to represent the Justness of our Cause,
 and that we might see what Help thereby might be made
 unto us. After which, by the special Providence of God,
 a Door being opened for the Instruction of some Students
 at a College in the *Netherlands*, we sent thither some
 young Men unto their Studies, not to become a Reproach
 to the *Scottish Church*, (as some say) but to be instructed
 in Theology, *that so they might be in better Capacity to
 keep up the Testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to
 our Covenanted Reformation*. Whereupon in some process
 of time, we received back Mr. *James Renwick*, an or-
 dained

dained Minister, whose Labours God hath blessed with Fruit and Increase, to the praise of Grace. Hereafter, while we continued to keep up our general Meetings and Correspondencies, and also endeavoured to contribute what Aid we could in our places and stations, to uphold the Banner of the Gospel, the Persecuters Fury did rage against us in a very great measure; *in putting out cruel Acts and Laws, for all Subjects to apprehend, or cause apprehend us, wherever we might be found, and raise the Hue and Cry after us:* Also, *inhibiting all to reset us, or correspond any manner of way with us, under the hazard and pain of being liable to the same rigour of their Laws that we ourselves were.* Whereupon many of us being taken and killed, and very many banished, and sent to be sold as Slaves, while we could not escape falling into their hands in great Numbers, partly by their vigilancy and diligence, and partly through the information and intelligence that they got from many in the Country where we wandered; we were then necessitate to put forth another *Declaration, November 1684.* which was affixed upon some Market-crosses, and several Parish Church Doors, to deter and scar the Country from giving Intelligence of us, and also explain the latter Part of the foresaid Declaration at *Sanquhar, concerning the declaring of War against the Tyrant and his Accomplices, and to wipe off that most odious and false Calumny, of being of the Judgment to kill all who were not of our own Opinion.* Which Declaration, though many cried out against it, yet was not condemned by so many as the former: And though it was the occasion of a greater Trial to the people of the Land than any formerly, because the Enemies pressed an Oath for abjuring the same, so violently and generally, and with such a fair and lying Face, that many yielded to it; some Ministers taking it, and others pleading for it, (but as the Lord had many in the Land bearing Testimony against the foresaid *Abjuration*, some of them even unto death; of divers who had complied with it, expressed afterward great sorrow and remorse for that Deed) yet the foresaid Declaration was so far effectual, as to deter many from their former Diligence in informing against us, and also to draw out some to join with us, and own

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the Work more publickly in their Places and Stations, than before this they had done. But in the mean time, *when they were persecuting us so hotly, their Soldiers and some Gentlemen killing us wherever we could be found, without either Trial or Sentence, before any of their so called Judicatories; and when they were holding their Courts concerning the abjuring of that same Declaration, the Lord did remove, by Death, that Tyrant Charles the Second!* Whereupon instantly followed the proclaiming of *James Duke of York*, a professed and known Papist, an avowed Enemy to God and Godliness, by a Party of his own Creatures, as *King of Great Britain, France and Ireland*; and afterwards his convocating a Parliament in Scotland, to authorise and confirm the foresaid Proclamation, and to establish him in his Usurpation and Tyranny. Therefore we thought, that such a Deed could not pass without some Witness and Testimony against the same by us, unless we had forgotten the *Method of our worthy, zealous, and resolute Reformers, and our solemn Bonds and Covenants to the Lord, and also his great Kindness shown unto us, in preserving a Remnant of us in this hot fiery Furnace.* Hence we published another Declaration at *Sanquhar, May 28. 1685. Testifying against the foresaid Proclamation, and protesting against the then pretended Parliament, convocate by him to establish his Tyranny, and carry on his other Designs, and also bearing Witness and Testimony against all kind of Papistry, in general and particular Heads, as is fully expressed in our National Covenant, against its entering into this Land again (which he and his Complices were clearly seen to be driving at before, at that time. and much more since) and against any thing which might make way for the same, &c.* Which Declaration, as it was not so much condemned by others, as any of our former, so Enemies were so far restrained by God, and diverted by other Means, of present occurring Exigencies, that it never as yet became any Trial to the Land. This was done in the mean time of the *Earl of Argyle* his Expedition, with which we were much pressed to concur; and severals imbodyed with us, were drawn away with the Importunity of some Ministers, and others of that Association; yet we could not join with them,

them, nor espouse their Declaration as the State of our Quarrel, because it was not concerted according to the ancient Plea of the *Scottish* Covenanters, in Defence of our Reformation, *expressly*, according to our Covenants, National and Solemn League, of which they made no mention in their Declaration, nor of Presbyterial Government, which was of purpose, lest the Sectarians should be irritate, and because it opened a Door for a Confederacy with Sectarians and Malignants, of which Malignants they had some among them guilty of shedding our Blood at *Airs Moss*. After the Defeat of this Expedition, in Answer to the Desire of some Ministers, who came over with the foresaid Earl (at least it was reported to us they desired such a thing) we had a Conference with them *July 22. 1685*, in which, instead of allaying Differences, the Proposals that were made for Union did heighten our Breaches, both with them and among ourselves, as did appear by the Consequence: For herein, though they offered Accommodation, yet, in Conference, to bring it about, they maintained, and did not disown that which bred Alienation, to wit, *A previous Information they had sent to Strangers, accusing us of heavy things, that we had not only cast off all Magistrates, but had constitute among ourselves all Kinds of Magistrates, and were for cutting off all as open Enemies, who did not acknowledge our imaginary Government, that our Societies were only an erroneous Faction, and have no Power of calling Pastors, &c.* Which Information, so full of Calumnies, though they did extenuate, alledging that Copy of it which we produced was forged; yet they confessed some such Information was written, and went on to prosecute in effect the same Crimination, and said, they excerpted all out of our publick Papers, and further challenged us for falsely accusing them in our Protestation against the *Scottish* Congregation at *Rotterdam*, where they with others were promiscuously charged with sundry things *in the gross*, which they were not guilty of. We confessed it was an Oversight, conjunctly to accumulate these Charges without Distinction; but taking them separately, we offered to make out every thing there charged, upon the Names inserted. Furthermore, in
 inveigh-

inveighing against Mr. Renwick's Ordination, they ac-
 cused the Church of Holland of *Erastianism*, and of three
 Sprinklings in Baptism, which they called *Popish*, and
 some other Corruptions. To which he only replied,
That he had received his Ordination from the Presbytery of
Groningen, and they being Foreigners, and not chargeable
either with our Defections, or any declining from the Testi-
mony of their own Church, but advancing and groaning un-
der some Corruptions from which they were never reformed,
would come under another Consideration than the Ministers
of our own Church, defending a Course of Defection. How-
 beit, as he protested in the Face of their Presbytery,
 when he received Ordination, against all things that he
 knew among them dissonant to the Reformation of the
 Church of Scotland, so he told his purpose to inform that
 Venerable Presbytery, how they were represented in Scot-
 land; and if they could not clear themselves, at least of some
 of the grossest of these things, he would be willing to acknow-
 ledge, before such as were competent, that he had offended
 in meddling with them. The Accommodation they of-
 fered was upon Terms which we thought destructive to
 our Testimony, to lay aside all Debate, and let Bygones
 pass, and go on in the publick Work, which we did not
 think was the way to heal our sore: But we offered, if
 Differences and Exceptions could be removed in a right
 and honest way, we would be most willing to join with
 them; which Exceptions were given in, in these Parti-
 culars following, viz. Their leaving the Country, and de-
 serting the publick Work, when it was so necessary to concur
 in the Testimony, in a Time of so great a Famine of the Go-
 spel; and not only not concurring in the Testimony, but con-
 demning it in Sanquhar and Lanerk Declarations, even as
 to the matter of them; and not condemning the paying of
 the Locality imposed for maintaining Soldiers against the
 Work and People of God; their countenancing the Compliers of
 the Time, while in the Land; and, when abroad, joining with
 the Scots Congregation at Rotterdam, and hearing the In-
 dulged preach there; their informing against us, and asper-
 sing us with slanders, such as these in the forementioned In-
 formation; and their concurring in the Earl of Argyle's As-
 sociation, against which we had so many things to object,

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as above hinted. Which Exceptions (though among the least we have against many other Ministers, with whom we have no Clearness to join in our now Circumstances, yet) we thought sufficient to demur upon, when, after many fruitless Janglings, we could receive no Satisfaction about them, nor a publick Testimony satisfiably stated, wherein we might both agree and concur; albeit we made an Overture in the End, that they and we should endeavour it in this Sort, *That they severally by themselves should draw up all the Sins of the Time, and we by ourselves, that so, when compared together, it might be seen where we differed, and how far we could unite.* But tho' they seemed to be as much for it as we at first, yet in the End when it was offered, they rejected it. So the Conference broke up; and thereafter we were more untenderly dealt with by them, and also deserted by several joined with us in Fellowship, who from that Time began to leave off coming to our General Meetings, and to keep separate Ways, without respect to our former consented to Agreement; and also did hear, receive, and spread some false Reports given forth against us, without premonishing us about the same, and drew many off from our Societies by such means. With some of which we had a Conference, January 28. 1686, who said, *They had a verbal Commission from some Societies in Carrick, &c.* the Effect whereof (whatever was the Intent of their coming) tended to a further breach, though we were not conscious to ourselves of any untender Dealing with them. For, first, we did endeavour to remove all supposed Grounds, upon which they might stumble into Alienation from us, by clearing our Minds about all these things the Ministers laid to our Charge. Then several Questions of Weight about our present Differences were proponed to the Meeting, to wit, *about a Letter of Accusation spread against us*, which they did not positively disclaim, *about the Earl of Argyle's Declaration* (which they would own or disown, according as it was diversly interpreted) *about the Exceptions given in against the Ministers* (which they alledged were not valid.) And finally, we asked the foresaid Persons, *Whether or not they were clear to join with us, in general and particular Fellowships,*

now when they had heard us speak our Minds so freely? This
 they refused to answer, putting the Question back,
 whether or not we would join with them? And gene-
 rally, in all the Questions, they declined Freedom and
 Plainness, and seemed averse from satisfying us, and to
 be rather for contending, than a free Communing for
 Union. Chiefly they stickled about a general Conclu-
 sion, previously agreed to, and resolved upon among us,
That nothing relative to the Publick, and concerning the
whole, should be done, without the Consent, or at least the
Knowledge of the whole. Which Conclusion, though for-
 merly they agreed to, yet now they called an Imposi-
 tion; alledging, that thereby they might not hear a faith-
 ful Minister, when Occasion offered; though we told
 them, we did not take that Conclusion in an absolute
 Sense, but expounded it, as it is after qualified, with the
 several Cautions, mentioned *Head 1. Sect. 3.* In fine,
 for the Result of this Conference, When we were urged
 as above, (whether we would join with them as former-
 ly?) by way of Retortion to our Proposal of the same
 to them, we told them, we could not answer them in
 name of our Societies, having no Direction from them
 for that Effect; and that for our own part, we would
 not refuse accidental or occasional Communion with
 them, as Brethren and Christians; but in the present
 Circumstances, we could not be clear to concur with
 them as formerly, in carrying on the publick Work, un-
 til our Exceptions were removed; which were, Their
 breaking that Conclusion of Brotherhood formerly con-
 descended to, in their calling Ministers, against whom
 we had Exceptions unremoved, without acquainting us
 therewith, in their drawing together in Arms without
 our Knowledge, and contrary to what was concluded by
 themselves with our Friends; and their siding with o-
 ther Persons in Points of Disagreement against us; where-
 upon they broke away abruptly. And their Carriage
 since hath been very disengaging, by their labouring ma-
 ny Ways to represent us unto the World as odious, in
 their Informations given in to Ministers against us. But
 now we must bear many Obloquies from them and o-
 thers, waiting in dependance on the Lord's Vindication,

who

who will *bring forth our Righteousness* (or rather the Righteousness of his own Cause, by us maintained) *as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day, in his own Time.* But shunning to be prolix, and studying all Brevity possible, we shall here desist from such a sad and lamentable Relation, wherein we have but touched some of the many Steps of our Defection, and our poor and insignificant Contendings against the same.

*The DECLARATION of the present State
of our Testimony.*

THE former Deduction we have premised, that the State of our present Controversies may be the more fully and clearly represented, and that what follows may be the better understood; having discovered how our Defections and Breaches began, and how they have multiplied and increased, and how notwithstanding the Lord hath never wanted a Company of living Witnesses to bear Testimony against the same. But seeing as it hath been the Lot of the more faithful in all Ages of the Church, so in our Day, these whom the Lord hath honoured and helped to witness for him, against the crooked Ways of the Generation, have had it for their Trial to be much suspected, reproached, contradicted, censured and opposed by many of lukewarm, backdrawing and indifferent Tempers; and we have not wanted our Share; by reason of the dreadful Imputations of Persecutors, and the Misrepresentations of pretended Friends, whereby many of Zion's Wellwishers have been nonplus'd, what to think of us and of our Cause: Therefore, for the Glory of God, the Vindication of Truth, the Satisfaction of puzzled Consciences, clearing of Differences, wiping off Reproaches, removing of Mistakes upon our part, reclaiming such, as through Ignorance, Misinformation, or misconceiving Apprehensions, have heretofore mistaken, at least have become jealous of our Principles and Practices; for convincing of these

(if

(if the Lord will) who mostly oppose us; for maintaining, according to our Power and Places, the covenanted Work of Reformation, and that the young Generation may not be stumbled (who are greatly in hazard thereof, by the Turnings aside that have been to the right and left hand.) And finally, that all the Christian reformed World, who will impartially weigh Matters in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, without Affection or Prejudice, may see with their own Eyes, and attain unto a better Understanding concerning us; upon these and the like grave and important Considerations, we, for ourselves, and all who adhere unto us, in the stated Testimony against *Popery, Prelacy, Erastianism, Sectarianism, Schism or Defection*, find ourselves obliged to give an Account of our Principles to the World, and then proceed to offer a brief Reply to the material Accusations which are given forth against us in Letters, Informations and Conferences. We shall now therefore, in the first place, give a short Declaration of our *Testimony*, shewing first what we maintain, and positively own, as the Matter of it. And *secondly*, what we disown, as prejudicial thereunto, and inconsistent therewith.

As to the *First*, We sincerely, unanimously, and constantly testify and declare our hearty embracing of, and Adherence unto the written Word of God, contained in the *Scriptures of the Old and New Testament*, as the only Rule of Faith and Manners, and whatsoever is founded thereupon: such as the Confession of Faith, our Catechisms Larger and Shorter, our Covenants, National and Solemn League, the Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagement to Duties, the Causes of God's Wrath, the ordinary and perpetual Officers of the Church by Christ's own Appointment; such as Pastors, Doctors, Elders and Deacons, and the Form of Church-government, which is commonly called Presbyterial, either in Congregational, Presbyterial, or Synodical Assemblies, whether Provincial, National or Oecumenical; together with all the Acts and Proceedings of our General Assemblies (especially from the Year 1638 to 1649 inclusive) yea, and every Piece of the attained unto Reformation of the Church of Scotland.

In like manner, we testify and declare our cordial Adherence

herence unto all the faithful Contendings, that have been owned and prosecute by Ministers or Professors, for Promoval and Defence of Reformation in former Times: as these, Against the publick Resolutions, Cromwel's Usurpation, the vast Toleration of Heresies and Sects in his Time: as also, To all the faithful Contendings of Ministers and Professors since the unhappy Restoration of Charles II. (when the Work of Reformation was overturned) unto this very Day, whether against the sacrilegious Usurpation and Tyranny of the Malignant Party, or against the Compliances, Defections and Unfaithfulness of Ministers and Professors. More particularly, unto all faithful Protestations, Testimonies and Declarations, that have been given in these latter Times for the Work of Reformation, and against all Usurpations of and Encroachments upon the Prerogatives of Christ's Crown and Privileges of his House, and any thing else, of whatsoever Sort, prejudicial to the Reformation: And expressly we declare our Adherence unto the Declarations published at Rutherglen, Sanguhar, (first and last) and at Lanerk, together with the Apologetical Declaration affixed upon some Market-crosses, and several Parish Church-doors, for the Matter, Substance and Scope of them, as accommodated to the Times wherein they were exhibited, according as we explain them afterward.

Head, 2. Finally, we Testify and Declare, our Cordial owning and approving of the Faithful and Free Preaching of the Gospel in the open fields, as well as in Houses, both before and since Bothwell; and of the Duty of defending the Gospel and ourselves by Arms, and the Lawfulness of Defensive War against the Usurpers of our Ecclesiastical and Civil Liberties; and consequently, all these appearances in a Martial manner against the publick Enemies of this Church and Kingdom at Pentland, Drumclog, Bothwell, and Aird Moss. And also our Adherence unto the Testimonies given by Martyrdom on Fields, Scaffolds and Seas, or otherways by Banishment, Imprisonment, Stigmatizings, Tortures, or Suffering any otherways, for their Adherence unto the Reformation, and Non-compliance with the God provoking Courses of the time, and for not owning the Authority, or rather Tyranny of Usurpers, in place of Magistracy qualified according to the word of God. As

As to the *Second*, We sincerely, Unanimously, and constantly Testify and Declare, our rejecting of whatever is contradictory or contrary unto the Written Word of God, or not founded thereupon, either expressly or by direct near or necessary consequence: And more particularly, in like manner, we Testify and Declare our Rejecting and Disowning of *Popery, Quakerism, Libertinism, Antinomianism, Socinianism*; and all other *heresies* under whatsoever Designation, together, with the *Blasphemies, Heresies, and wild Extravagancies* of *John Gib*: All *Errours upon the right hand*, such as *Anabaptism, Independency, Millenianism*; and all other *Sects and Schisms*, together with the Divisive courses followed by any others, especially in our day, and the usurping of any upon the Ministerial Function not lawfully called thereunto, as upon this ground (beside other reasons we have excepted against Mr. *John Flint*: and all *Errors upon the left hand*, as *Prelacy and Erastianism*, (against which our Church hath had much warring and contending) together with *all kinds of Idolatry, Superstition and Prophaneness, and whatsoever else is* and contrary to sound Doctrine and the power of Godliness.

Moreover, considering what Hainous and God-provoking sins have been committed in this Land against God, in contempt of, and with prejudice to his Cause and Covenants, since we began to turn away from him, we shall briefly enumerate some of these, Declaring our detestation and Abhorrence of the same. Therefore, in the first place, we declare our Testimony against all compliances with the Iniquities of this time Established by Law, in obedience to their cursed Commandments, directly or indirectly. All countenancing of and complying with *Prelacy; Supremacy, or Tyranny, or any Usurpation on Church or State, made by this Malignant Enemy*. All hearing of *Curates or Indulged*, or paying either of them *Stipends*, exacted by iniquitous Law setting them up: All answering to the Courts of *Persecutors*; Taking any of their *Oaths*, as the Declaration, renouncing the Covenants, the Oaths of *Supremacy and Allegiance, the Test, the Oath of Abjuration*. The

Oath Concerning things to be enquired after, and all others of the like nature; particularly, the late new contrived Oath of Allegiance, substitute in the place of all the former, and comprehending in its bosome, the Extract of all their inquiries, requiring the acknowledgments and maintainance of the most open, faced, and declared absolute Tyranny of the Duke of York, in his invading the Sovereignty of the most High; and all his subservient Popish and Arheistical designs, which is contained in the late Proclamation or the aborainable Toleration: Likeways all subscribing any of their Bonds imposed to fetter and defile the Conscience, as the Bond of Peace, Bond of Regulation; the Bond of Compearance and all others partaking of Affinity with these; and also the paying any of their wicked Impositions for bearing down the Gospel, and work of Reformation, as Militia-Money, Cess, Locality, Fines, or Stipends, or anything that may strengthen the hands of such evil Doers. And in like manner, we declare our Testimony against all the steps of Defection, declining from or contradictory unto the Covenanted Reformation of the Church of Scotland; and therefore we disown, as inconsistent with our Ancestors Testimony, that promiscuous Association in the late Expedition 1685, and all Association and Confederacies whatsoever with Sectaries and Malignants, and any other thing that opens a Door for their Introduction and Toleration, or whereby the state of the Quarrel is not proposed according to the ancient Plea, against both right and left hand Opposites.

But more particularly, because our Principles are more suspected upon the Ordinances of Magistracy and the Ministry; therefore we shall plainly unbosom our Hearts about these also. We profess then concerning Magistracy, (to obviate the Suspicion of any unfriendliness towards that Ordinance, and disloyalty to rightful Magistrates) and declare our Minds in these Assertions. As we distinguish between Magistracy, or the Office (in the abstract) and the persons invested with the Office, of Magistracy in itself considered, we say, That as it is not subjectively founded upon Grace, so it is a holy and divine Institution, for the good of human Society, the encouragement

ragement of Virtue and Piety, and curbing of Vice and Im-
 piety, competent unto, and honourable amongst both Christi-
 ans and Heathens. 2. As for such Magistrates as being
 rightly and lawfully constitute over us, do act as the Mi-
 nisters of God, in a direct Line of Subordination to God, in the
 defence of our Covenanted Reformation, and the Subjects
 Liberties; we declare, whensoever we can obtain and
 enjoy such Rulers, we will own, embrace, obey, and de-
 fend them to the outmost of our Power, and prove encoura-
 ging, subject, and obedient to them in our Places and Stati-
 ons. 3. In things Civil, though we do not say that eve-
 ry tyrannical Act or Action doth make a Tyrant, yet
 we hold, that habitual, obstinate, and declared Oppo-
 sition to, and overturning of Religion, Laws and Liber-
 ties, and making void all Contracts with Subjects, or
 when he usurps a Power without any Compact, or giving
 any Security for Religion and Liberties; or when he is such,
 as the Laws of the Lund do make incapable of Government.
 These do sufficiently invalidate his Right and Relation
 of Magistracy; and warrant Subjects, especially in Co-
 venanted Lands, to revolt from under, and disown Alle-
 giance unto such a Power. In such a Case, when the
 Body of a Land, collectively considered, or the more
 faithful and better part of that Land, in the time of na-
 tional and universal Apostasy, and complete and habitual
 Tyranny, adhering closely to the fundamental Constitutions
 and laudable Practices of that Covenanted Land, (when the
 fundamental Laws of that Kingdom are directly over-
 turned, and the essential Conditions of the mutual Com-
 pacts are broken, and such as cleave closely to the Refor-
 mation and Liberties of the Kingdom are accounted Re-
 bels, and prosecuted as such) may reject and refuse the
 Magistratical Relation, between the Tyrant and them: yet
 before the Erection of formal Magistracy, they may not
 lawfully arrogate to themselves that Authority which
 the Tyrant hath forfeited, or claim to themselves the
 Authority of Judges; though radically, they have the
 Authority of the Law, by their natural Right and fun-
 damental Power, which God allows, and is Nature's At-
 tendant; and the municipal Privilege of these Subjects;
 but they cannot act judicially, in either Civil or Crimi-
 nal

nal Courts, only in the *interim*, they may lawfully do
 that which may most conduce to the securing of themselves,
 Religion and Liberty. 4. In Church Affairs, we allow the
 Magistrate a Power over the outward Things of the
 Church, viz. what belongs to the Bodies of Church Officers
 and Members, but not over the inward Things of the
 Church, such as Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Govern-
 ment. We own he may, and ought to preserve both
 Tables of the Law, and punish by corporal and temporal
 Punishment, whether Church Officers or Members, as o-
 penly dishonour God by gross Offences, either against
 the first or second Table; but this he may not do every
 way, but after his own manner; not *intrinsically*, but
extrinsically; not under the consideration of a Scandal,
 but of a Crime. We grant he may order such things as
 are for the well being and subsistence of the Church, and
 for that end may convocate Synods in some Cases of the
 Church, *pro re nata*, beside their ordinary Meetings (ac-
 cording as that part of Art. 2. chap. 31. of our Confession of
 Faith, is fully and clearly explained by the Act of the
 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, convened
 at Edinburgh, August 27. 1647. Sess. 23. approving the
 foresaid Confession of Faith) and may be present there
 in external Order; but not *preside* in their Synodical De-
 bates and Resolutions: He may add his Civil Sanction to
 Synodical Results, but we deny him any Power to restrain
 Church Officers in dispensing of Christ's Ordinances, or forbid
 them to do what Christ hath given them in Commandment.
 We own, That as he ought to take care of the Mainte-
 nance of the Ministry, Schools, and Poor, so *imperatively*
 he may command Church Officers to do their Duties;
 yet we deny him an *elictive* Power, either to do himself
 what is incumbent to Church Officers, or to depute others to
 administer Ordinances in his Name, or by any Ministerial
 Power received from him. Finally, We allow him a *con-*
firmative Power, whereby in his own way he assisteth,
 strengthneth, and ratifyeth what Church Officers do by
 virtue of their Office; but we deny unto him a *privative*
 Power, which detracteth any way from the Church's
 Authority; for he is a Nursing-father, and not a Step-
 father. In sum, we grant this to be the full Extent of
 the

the Magistrates Supremacy in the Church Affairs, to
order whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, that
it be diligently done for the House of the God of Heaven. And
 what further he may usurp, we disown and detest.
 But considering the God-contemning and Heaven-da-
 ring Wickedness, Usurpation, and Tyranny, of the pre-
 sent and latter pretended Rulers over this Land, and
 what grievous Affronts, bold and open Defiances, they
 have given to the most High God, and what unparal-
 lelled Abuses they have done to the Ordinance of Magi-
 stracy : Therefore, *We disown, detest, and abhor the Cor-
 ruption, Perversion, and Eversion of that Ordinance in this*
Land. And in the first Place, for the late Tyrant ; As
 we do abhor the Memory of his *Erection, and unhappy*
Restoration, after, by many Evidences, he was known to
 be an Enemy to God and the Country ; his nefarious
 Wickedness, in ejecting the Ministers of Christ from
 their Charges, and introducing *abjured Prelacy ; his at-*
 tention of the *rocious Arrogance, in rescinding all Acts of Parliament*
 for the Works of Reformation ; his unparalleled Perfidy
 and Perjury, in *making void, and burning the Covenants ;*
 his Heaven-daring Usurpation, in arrogating to himself
 that *blasphemous and Christ-dethroning Supremacy ; his au-*
 dacious and treacherous exercising of that usurped Power,
 in giving Indulgences to outed Ministers, to divide and
 destroy the Church ; his arbitrary and manifest Ty-
 ranny over the Consciences of poor People, pressing
 them to conformity with the Time's Abominations,
 contrary both to Religion and Reason, and imposing
 upon them Conscience-debauching Oaths. His absolute
 Domination over the whole Land, in levying Militia,
 and other Forces, Horse and Foot, for carrying on his
 wicked Designs, of advancing himself to an arbitrary
 Power, and bearing down the Work of Reformation,
 and enslaving the People ; particularly, in sending an
 Host of savage and barbarous Highlanders, several
 Times, upon a poor innocent People, to waste and de-
 stroy them ; and imposing wicked Taxations for the
 Maintenance of these Forces, professedly required for
 suppressing Religion and Liberty, and preserving and
 promoting his Absoluteness over all Matters and Per-
 sons,

' sons, Sacred and Civil. His Cruelty over the Bodies
 ' of Christians, in chasing, catching, and killing upon
 ' the Fields, many, without Sentence past upon them,
 ' or Time previously to deliberate upon Death; yea,
 ' and without taking notice of any Thing to be laid a-
 ' gainst them, according to the worst of their own Laws;
 ' drowning Women, some of them very young, and some
 ' of exceeding old Age; imprisoning, laying in Irons,
 ' exquisite Torturings by Boots, Thummikins, and Fire-
 ' matches; cutting Pieces out of the Ears; banishing and
 ' selling as Slaves Old and Young; Men and Women, in
 ' great Numbers, bloodily butchering upon Scaffolds;
 ' hanging some of all Sexes and Ages; heading, mang-
 ' ling, dismembring alive, quartering dead Bodies; op-
 ' pressing many others in their Estates, forfeiting their
 ' Possessions, robbing, pillaging their Goods; casting
 ' Men, Women, and Children out of their Habitations;
 ' interdicting any to reset them, under the Pains of be-
 ' ing treated after the same manner.' And all this for
 their Adherence unto the Covenanted Work of Reforma-
 tion; while, in the mean time, many Murderers, Adul-
 terers, and Incestuous Persons, Sodomites, Witches, and
 other Malefactors, were pardoned, or past without Pu-
 nishment. So, for the continued and habitual Tract of
 these, and many other Acts of Tyranny, we have dis-
 owned, and yet adhere to our Revolt from under the
 Yoke of Tyranny of *Charles the Second*, and declare, that
 his whole Government was a complete and habitual Ty-
 ranny, and no more Magistracy than Robbery is a right-
 ful Possession. And in like manner, in the next Place
 We disown the Usurpation of *James Duke of York*, suc-
 ceeding and insisting in the same Footsteps of Tyranny,
 Treachery, and Cruelty; with the same domineering
 over Men and Womens Consciences, and Cruelty to-
 wards their Bodies and Estates, and Oppression over the
 Land; arrogating to himself an absolute Power, more
 declaredly than any other formerly; and labouring to
 bring these Lands again in Subjection to the Yoke of
 Antichrist, being a professed Papist; and therefore
 whatever Right he may pretend by Lineal Succession
 Suffrage of iniquitous Laws, and packed Parliaments,

hath no legal or lawful Right to the Crown: Especially, seeing many Acts of ancient Parliaments declare Papists altogether incapable of bearing any Rule, or any other whomsoever, except they be Maintainers of the true Protestant Religion, according to the National Covenant, as it is statute by 8th Act, Parl. 1. Repeated in the 99th Act, Parl. 7. ratified in the 23d Act, Parl. 11. and 144th Act, Parl. 12. of King James VI. and 4th Act of King Charles I. And here we stand as to the Point of Magistracy. .

Concerning the Ministry, to obviate the Suspicion of any Averſation from the holy Ordinance of the Ministry, and of denying Obedience in the Lord to true and faithful Pastors, We in like manner declare, 1. As we distinguish between the Ministry and Ministers, as between the Office and the Persons invested therewith; so, as for the Ministry itself, we own the Lawfulness and Necessity thereof, against Quakers, and all its other Opposers; and hold it our Duty (as we would not be rebellious against Christ) to own, obey, and encourage in the Lord, all true and faithful Pastors, and highly to honour them in Love for their Works sake. 2. We look upon it as unlawful, for any Man, never so well qualified otherwise, to take upon him the Work of the Ministry, without Licence, or a lawful Call and Ordination, by laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, or any competent Number of these to whom Christ hath committed the Power of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. 3. We hold, That Power of Church Government and Discipline, together with the Exercise of the Ministerial Function, by Divine Appointment, is neither committed, nor doth appertain to Pope, Prelate, Magistrate, or Multitude of Believers, Presbyteriated or Unpresbyteriated; but only unto the Ministers and Officers, which Christ hath appointed over his own Church, (which is his Mediatory Kingdom) as the Subject and Recepracle of Church Power; and say, That Believers are the End of Church Power, and the Object thereof, or the Party to be governed; but not the Subject, or Governors, or in any measure endued with that Power of themselves, either formally or radically. 4. We hold, That Schism,

or

or disowning and rejecting of, or groundless and unwarrantable separating from true and faithful Ministers, to be a very heinous, hateful, and hurtful Sin; yet this doth not hinder, but that it may be Duty, in a broken State of the Church, to withdraw from Ministers chargeable with Defection: For, seeing this Church hath attained to such a high Degree of Reformation, and seeing, by solemn Covenants to the Almighty, we have bound ourselves to maintain and defend the same; seeing by reason of the Enemies Subtilty and Cruelty, and the fainting, falling, and failing of Ministers, so many dreadful Defections have been introduced, embraced, and countenanced; seeing, in these Times of distemp'ring Confusions, we are now deprived of the Remedy of settled Judicatories, whereunto we might recur for rectifying of Disorders; and seeing we are bound to witness against these complying and backsliding Courses, whereby the Wrath of God is so much kindled against the Land: Therefore, we hold it as our Duty, that when a Backsliding or Defection is embraced, avowed, or obstinately defended, in such Things as have been reformed, either expressly or equivalently, especially being witnessed against doctrinally, and further confirmed by other Testimonies, We judge it lawful, reasonable, and necessary, in a declining, backsliding, and troubled State of the Church, to leave that part of the Church which hath made such Defection, whether Ministers or Professors, as to a joint Concurrence in carrying on the publick Work, (according as it is given in Command to *Jeremiah* xv, 9, *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them*) and to adhere unto the other Part of the Church, Ministers and Professors, whether more or fewer, who are standing stedfastly to the Defence of the Reformation, witnessing against others who have turned aside and declined therefrom; until the Defections of the backsliding Party be confessed, mourned over, and forsaken. This is no Separation from the Church of *Scotland*, but only a departing and going forth from her Sins, Backslidings, and Defections, as we are commanded by the Lord.

But considering, how this Course of Defection and Re-

Revolting from the Lord hath either been carried on, complied with, countenanced, or covered, by the most part of the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*; whereby the Prerogatives of Christ have been surrendered, and the Usurper established in the peaceable Possession of His Royal Throne, the Privileges and Liberties of his Kingdom (the Purchase of his Blood, transmitted to us thro' the many valiant Witnessings of our worthy Ancestors) abandoned and yielded to the most declaredly stated Enemy to Christ, that ever was engaged in opposition to him; and whereby the holy Ordinance of the Ministry is so much wronged, corrupted and perverted; and such Indignities and Affronts given unto Christ, the Giver and Granter of their Commission; and Ministers themselves made contemptible before the People. We declare our Testimony against all Compliances, Defections, Backslidings, Turnings-aside, and Prejudices done to the Work of God, by the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*. Howbeit, as we acknowledge to the Lord's Praise, that there have been faithful Ministers in this Church from time to time, who have valiantly, zealously, and faithfully wrestled, contended, and witnessed against, not only the heinous Indignities done to their Princely Master, by the open and avowed Enemy; but also the Wrongs done to his Cause and Kingdom, by the Compliances, Defections, and Lukewarmness of other Ministers. So we mention not these things to reflect upon the holy Office, or from any Prejudices at their Persons; neither to justify ourselves, but to show our Respect unto, and Esteem of the holy Ordinance, to clear Truth, and to vindicate the Cause.

Therefore we must testify against these great Defections of many Ministers, *viz.* In the first Place, against that Concurrence given by many Ministers to the Treaty of *Breda*, for bringing home the *King*, after many Discoveries of his Treachery and Inclinations to Tyranny, notwithstanding of many *seasonable and necessary* Warnings of the General Assembly, to be very *wary and circumspect* in trusting when treating with him; against their falling upon *publick Resolutions*, even when our Church had arrived at *her highest Pitch of Reformation*; and the fainting

fainting of others, in forbearing to give faithful Warning of so great and dangerous a Sin, when some for their Freedom and Faithfulness were suspended from their Ministry; against their Compliances with Cromwel; against not standing for the Intrinsic Privileges of the Church, in protesting against that Heaven-daring Usurpation, of dissipating and dissolving all the Church Assemblies, and free Courts of Christ: Their sinful and general succumbing, and yielding the Charge and Oversight of their peculiar Flocks, at the Command of Man, as if they had not received their Commission from Christ, and that instead of faithful witnessing against the fatal overturning of the Work of God, and Introduction of abjured Anti-Christian Prelacy, the most part did forthwith embrace it, many others countenanced it by hearing these intruded Hivlings: Their exhibiting no publick plain Testimony, against the nefarious Wickedness committed in that Day when our Solemn League and Covenant was broken, and declared null, by contrary imposed Declarations, and Conscience ensnaring Oaths. Their Unfaithfulness and Disloyalty to the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, in not giving Testimony against the Supremacy, in the Day when it was by Law established upon the Usurper of Christ's Royal Dignities. Their general laying aside the Exercise of their Office, after the Work of Reformation was overturned, whereby poor People wanted Warning of the Sins and Snares of the Time. Their embracing of the Indulgence, their gaping after that pretended Privilege, who could not enjoy the same; and others dealing unfaithfully, in not witnessing plainly against the Granters and Receivers thereof, some pleading for it as no Defection, and others pleading for Union with these who had embraced it: and the Meeting of sundry Ministers in several Presbyteries, for rebuking and censuring the more faithful Servants of Christ, for discovering the Sinfulness of that Defection; and their laying Bonds on others not to preach against the same. Likewise, when the Lord stirred up some Ministers to go forth and preach the Gospel freely in the Fields, and was seen to countenance these Meetings, that some abode still in their Habitations, and did not concur with their more valiant and faithful

faithful Brethren, to display the Banner of the Gospel in
 that publick Manner: and others who not only lay by
 from the Exercise of their Ministry, but also countenanced
Prelacy in hearing of *Curates*, and the *Indulgence*, in
 preaching with and hearing these who accepted it; their
 being embraced both by Ministers and People, without
 any Acknowledgment of such Offences. Moreover,
 when some were forced to appear in Arms for Defence
 of Religion, Laws and Liberties, that they had so little
 Concurrence of Ministers, to countenance and encourage
 to these Expeditions: as also the great Hurt that some
 Ministers (together with others) did at the Appearance
 at *Bothwell*, putting in the late Tyrant's Interest in the
 Declaration of that Army, (as also was done at *Pentland*)
 and their opposing the mentioning the *Indulgence* among
 the publick Sins, and likewise of a Day of Humiliation,
 lest it should have been numbered as one of the Causes of
 God's Controversy with the Land: The Meeting of
 many Ministers after *Bothwell*, calling themselves an As-
 sembly, and voting for the Acceptation of the *Indemnity*,
 and the *Indulgence* or new Liberty (together with the
 Peoples *cautionary Bond*) for such Ministers as would live
 peaceably to preach in these Bounds, that the Enemies
 restricted them unto: and when an ensnaring Bond of
 Peace was imposed upon the Prisoners taken at *Bothwell*;
 their being silent, or not giving their Advice: and others
 perswading these Captives to put forth their Hand to
 that Abomination: and the great Unfaithfulness of the
 most Part, in not giving faithful Warning to People, of
 the Hazard of many other ensnaring Bonds and Oaths,
 imposed for debauching of Peoples Consciences: Their
 not taking part with the more faithful Ministers of
 Christ, in preaching the Gospel in the Fields, when they
 were mostly called to that Duty, in time of abounding
Snares from the right and left Hand; and reproaching and
 condemning others, who did jeopard and lose their Lives,
 for their Faithfulness in the Work of the Ministry, and
 denying Allegiance to these unrighteous Rulers: Some
 leaving of the Land, when they were mostly called to
 stay in it, to discharge the Duty of faithful Watchmen:
 and their long continued Silence, in not giving the Peo-
 ple

ple faithful Warning of the Snares and Abominations of the Time, when Enemies were most cruelly pressing for Compliance, and passing through with *Circuit-courts of unparalleled Inquisitions*: Their complying with Enemies, in bonding with their Courts (some to that Length, as to come under Obligations to forbear the Exercise of their Ministry.) And finally, the concurring and joining of some with such *Confederacies* and *Associations*, as did open a Door for the *Introduction* both of *Malignants* and *Sectaries*, contrary to our *Covenant-engagements*. But as we desire to mourn, that these things should be mentioned, and that we are necessitate to make such a sad and unpleasant Rehearsal, so also we desire, that what particular Steps of Defection may be there more indefinitely proposed, as to the Ministers; may be understood only of these to whom they are duly applicable.

But that our Testimony, as managed by us, may be the better understood, and Exceptions brought against us on that account more easily pre-occupied, before we proceed to the *Heads* of our *Vindication*, we desire that these few things may be Christianly constructed, by way of Caution and Concession,

I. We do indeed own and adhere unto all these Parts of our Testimony, essential and integral, former and latter, of greater and lesser Consequence; but we do not press every Part or Pendicle, Clause or Consequence of every one of our latter Declarations, as the Bond of our Communion, as is more fully explained afterward, *Head 2.* And in the *insufficient Grounds of withdrawing*, laid down *Head 5.* But if so be our Brethren will own and avouch, in Profession and Practice, every Part of our *covenanted Reformation*, and join with us in the Matter of all our Declarations and Testimonies against *Popery*, *Pre-lacy*, *Supremacy*, *Sectarianism*, and all the above mentioned *Compliances* and *Defections*, we will not require that they come all the same Length in the Manner and Form.

II. As the Cause of God, to wit, the *covenanted Reformation*, is to be distinguished from the Persons who do espouse, or formerly have owned that Quarrel; so it is the Cause we desire to contend for, and not the Ju-

stifica-

ification of Persons, in things extraneous to the Cause; therefore, whatever *personal Infirmities*, or Scandals of any Sort, have appeared among these who profess to own the same Cause with us, when not vindicated by the whole, ought not to reflect upon the Cause, nor to be imputed to all its honest Lovers; so we desire (which is just and equal) that the *scandalous Transgressors* or *Extravagancies* that any among us have fallen into, to the Detriment of the *publick Cause*, either by their latitudinarian Laxness, falling into Defection, or over-much Rigidity and Strictness, running beyond the Bounds of Mediocrity and Truth, may not be made use of as an Occasion of an ill Report, either upon the Cause or the Owners thereof.

III. If in *any thing* (abstract from our faithful and well-bottomed Contendings) we have in the Manner of managing Affairs, in reference to the *publick Cause*, through Ignorance or Imprudence jointly miscarried, having good Designs, and the thing not attended with Obstinacy; our Weakness and Insufficiency in the *abounding Confusions of these preceeding Times*, our faithful Guides and Men of Understanding, by Death and otherwise, being removed, should be compassionately looked upon, and tenderly handled: yea, in very Deed, we fear, that this shall be found to ly heavy upon these, who forbearing to *witness and contend publicly for the Lord, had forsaken us, while endeavouring to follow Duty*. However, so soon as any Error or Mistake did or doth appear amongst us, or any of us, presently by Degrees we endeavoured, and do endeavour, both severally, and together in Societies particular and general, the Amendment and forsaking thereof. And albeit possibly our Method in rectifying some Disorders, while the Matter at first was proposed to Consideration, sometimes was not desirable, yet it was, and is our Work, by piece and piece to attain unto a more exact Manner.

IV. Whatever may have been our *Miscarriages*, this is our *sincere and professed Design, Purpose and Resolution*, to lay out ourselves to the utmost of our Power, according to our Places and Stations, for promoting and propagating the *Work of Reformation*, closely adhering to our
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worthy Reformers, and those who have constantly walked in their Footsteps, stedfastly wrestling against the Corruptions and Innovations of the Times; continuing successively the Testimony for the Reformation: and that our Study is, to keep ourselves unpollured with the abounding Abominations of this our Day, and to hold fast the Truths of God, not losing them among our own Hands, but conveying them down to the succeeding Generation, equally guarding ourselves against right or left Hand Extremes.

Our VINDICATION from many Calumnies cast upon us by some Brethren that have left us, represented in several HEADS.

NOW, having with all Brevity possible declared the Matter of our Testimony, what we positively own and disown, we shall proceed thence to remove Mistakes, obviate unjust Exceptions against us, and to clear ourselves of calumnious Charges; though we must not think it strange, that we have been (through their Ignorance of Matters of Fact) mistaken by some, and also of our being reproached by very many. For we find in Scripture-records of former Ages, of our own and other Churches, that the faithful have been branded with strange Aspersions, and odious Calumnies, Satan always labouring to put odious Names upon real Duties, and to bury the Truths of God under the base Aspersions of vile Reproaches: yet, as the Lord hath in former Times, by his Appearances, blown away the same, so we desire to believe, that he will yet do the like, and vindicate his Truths from Error, Mistake and Contempt.

But, to come to the present Purpose, being represented by some, as having erected amongst us a formal authoritative Community, and Erastian Republick, taking unto us the Government both of Church and State; attributing unto the People the Power of Church-government; imposing sinful and unjust Restrictions upon Ministers and Professors; and unwarrantably dividing and separating from them; and consequently overturning the very Foundation of Presbyterian Government, and the covenanted Reformation: we shall

speake

Speak to sundry Heads, which may make the contrary appear, and free us of such a heavy Imputation, and declare us to be endeavouring only the promoting of that, which we are said to have overturned.

H E A D I.

Concerning our GENERAL MEETINGS.

WE are said, by some, to handle in these general Meetings and Correspondencies, Matters both of Church and State, and that *judicially, and by the same Persons and Assembly*: Therefore we desire, that these things following may be considered, for clearing the Nature of the Meetings, and wiping away Reproaches, and removing Mistakes about the same.

I. We look upon ourselves, as by constant and Habitual Tyranny, reduced to our native and radical Liberty in this matter; and desiring Faithfully to adhere unto the *Fundamental Laws and Laudable Constitutions of our Church and Covenanted Nation*, with the rest of the purer and better part: And therefore, though we cannot and do not assume to ourselves *a power of Magistracy*; yet after we had considered what would be best, and contribute most to the securing of ourselves and Religion, we Judged it Lawful, Expedient, and Necessary, to join together into one meeting, all the particular Societies who were of one Judgment and practice, in Reference to the matter of *our Stated Testimony*, by Formal Consent, for mutual help and Correspondence.

II. This Union being founded on *Common consent*, consonant to Scripture and Reason; for this end, the promoval of Reformation and preservation of ourselves: The general Conclusion we observe and lay down, in order to the managing Affairs for the best, by Deliberation amongst us, thus united, is that *Nothing relative to the Publick, and which concerns the whole, be done by any of us, without harmonious Consent, sought after, and rationally waited for, sufficient deliberation about*

hout the best means and manner. But seeing this Conclusion hath been much spoken against by some, and condemned as an Imposition; we shall here explain the same, by adding some few concessory Caveats. (1) That foresaid Conclusion is not to be taken in an Absolute Sense, as a Restriction simply necessary for all times, all Places, all Persons, all Cases, and Things. (2) Though the Conclusion imports, that even in necessary duties which concern the whole, a Part ought not go on therein, without proponing the same to the rest: For that which concerneth the whole, ought to be handled by the whole. Yet, if these shall sitfully deny their Concurrence, that Part may lawfully, without the Breach of the Conclusion, do it for themselves. (3) As for Points doubtful and controverted, this Conclusion is necessary to be observed, as an Orderly and Rational Method, for advising and Deliberating about the present Controversie; and so we look upon it as an hedge against Precipitancy and rashness, helpful for the Preservation of Union, excluding of Confusion, curbing of petulant Spirits. and right managing of Affairs. Thus, when according to this Conclusion a right Method is followed, we chuse that which is agreeable to the Law and to the Testimony.

III. These Meetings, as they are neither Civil nor Ecclesiastical Judicatories, so they are of the same Nature with particular Christian Societies, in the time of this Extream Persecution, gathered together in their general Correspondence, by mutual Advice and common Consent, endeavouring jointly *to know the Sins and Duties of the day*, that so we may be Helpful and Encouraging to one another, in Concluding what is necessary for our Preservation, and the *Propagation of our Testimony*, according to the word of God, the Law of Nature, the Fundamental Constitutions and Laudable practices of our Ancient Covenanted Church and Nation, acting jointly and Harmoniously, by way of Consolation, Deliberation and Admonitory Determination.

IV. These *Determinations and Resolutions*, condemned upon after that manner, though they be no formal Statutes of either Civil or Ecclesiastick Judicatories

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es, yet they are understood to be of a binding Force upon all them Consenters, partly by reason of the nature of the thing, and partly by virtue of their consent; but no ways obtruded as extending over the whole Kingdom, because coming from us: Though we think there lyeth upon them also a Moral Obligation to perform such necessary Duties.

V. All these things, as they are handled or considered among ourselves in our general Correspondencies, are not absolutely resolved upon, antecedently to the knowledge of the Societies, severally and apart, but consequently; that is, for the Preservation of Union, and shunning Separation and Division, we absolutely resolve nothing in the foresaid Meetings, but that for which we have the advice and consent of our Brethren; and when it is reported unto the Meeting, what any of the Societies agrees upon and advises unto, if the matter concern the whole (especially if it be of any dangerous Consequence to be mismanaged) nothing is done therein peremptorily, until the rest of the Societies get time to consider the thing also; otherways hardly can Errors and Divisions be prevented. This we hold to be our duty, and have been endeavouring the same, not intentionally keeping any thing from any Societies, that ever was handled at any of our Correspondencies: Albeit the unconcernedness of some, and the Neglect of others, who were particularly sent to our general meetings, hath prejudged their Societies of what was allowed them; which we wish in time coming may be amended.

VI. If so be any thing for the Present Occasion should be resolved upon in the common Correspondence, for which they had no Delegations, and which might be payable to debates before the Societies severally and apart, should know and consider it, it is not to be reckoned the Deed and Fact of the Societies, but of these persons then present, speaking meerly in their own names, not in the name of their Brethren, from whom they have no direction for such a thing: Neither are the Societies bound to stand unto it, if they see it either *unlawful* or *inexpedient*: Neither is their

not standing unto it, any way to be interpreted a drawing back from harmonious agreement, seeing their consent was not previously required, the matter never being imparted to them before the determined Resolution. Yea, in very Deed, the Breach of Harmony would ly rather at their door, who had so resolved upon any thing, either unlawful or inexpedient, without previous Advice and Consent. However, when any thing, is conditionally resolved upon in the Correspondence; and then imparted to the Societies severally, by their giving their consent thereto, it becometh their proper Fact and Deed also.

VII. Lastly, When things incident and controverted among ourselves, cannot be instantly composed and agreed upon, neither in Societies nor the general Correspondence: Then, according to Reason and Religion, every one is to take sufficient time to inform themselves and deliberate about the thing, before we proceed to any Determination; that so things may not be carried on rashly, and hand over head, but a right way followed, and no Sudden nor unwarrantable Division occasioned.

Hence it may be evident, how in these Meetings we have not gone out of our Stations, by concluding Matters judicially, as Judges, either Civil or Ecclesiastick, or by *Erastian Practices* confounded Church and State together, but acted therein as was competent and incumbent to Us.

H E A D II.

Concerning our Declarations.

Seeing the unjust imputations of Acting as Judges either Civil or Ecclesiastick, or as an *Erastian* re-publick, and other sad Accusations, are unfriendly drawn from our Declarations, particularly the first Declaration published at *Sanguhar*, and the following published at *Lanerke*. Therefore to remove such a Charge, concerning both these Declarations, we in general plainly declare, that we never did, neither do look upon these

these as Authoritative actions, and as such extended o-
 ver and binding the whole Land (though they were
 all morally obliged to do what we did, and more than
 we were able to do, and to own what we have done
 thereby, because of the Duty of the thing) but as De-
 clarations published in the Name of these who adhere
 unto, and consent with us, in the matter of the Testi-
 mony. But to speak more particularly, *first*, As to
 the first Declaration published at *Sanquhar*, we shall
 notice three things in it. *First*, the Designation, by
 which the Publishers and consenters are termed, *to wit*
The Representatives of the true Presbyterian Church and
Covenanted Nation of Scotland. *Secondly*, The princi-
 pal part of the Declaration, *to wit*, *The disowning of*
and revolting from under Charles II. *Thirdly*, The ex-
 pressive Declaration of War against that Tyrant and
 Usurper.

As to the *First*, *to wit*, the *Designation*; we declare
 That by it we understand only these who in the time of
 Tyranny and Apostasy, cleave most closely to the *Funda-*
mental Laws of the Kingdom, and to the parts and de-
 grees of the *Reformation* already attained in this *Re-*
formed and Covenanted Land, or the Remnant that is left
 bearing witness unto the same; not these who ordinarily
 are understood by this word, *to wit*, Persons formally
 invested with *Authority and Delegation* from these whom
 they represent; but only a poor people appearing most
 publickly for pursuing the *Ends of our Covenants*, some
 way Representing the Body that should have done it,
 in that they did it in their stead, though they could
 not have their Concurrence. Therefore as we utterly
 disclaim, as an *unsound and Erastian Principle and Pra-*
ctice, that the same party, persons, and Assembly for-
 mally invested with *Authority*, should take upon them
 to perform *Actions, Civil and Ecclesiastick*, representing
 both *Church and State*; so we declare, that neither the
 Authors nor we ever intended or practised any such
 thing. Hence, it may be evident, that we use not the
 word *Representative*, according to its ordinary and strict
 Acceptation, but more improperly, as it denotes the more
 faithfull and better part of the *Church and Kingdom*,
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representing others who should deserve the same Signa-
 nature, who, in the Time of *Compleat Tyranny and Na-
 tional Apostasy*, are for themselves, and such as do ad-
 here unto them, endeavouring closely to adhere unto
 the *Degrees of Reformation*, in the *best Times* of that
Church and State, acting jointly according to the *Word*
of God, the *Church's Constitutions*, and *Fundamental Laws*
of the Land; by *Virtue* of that *Natural Right* which
 is competent to *Subjects*, and *Men* meerly private, in
 time of *Necessity*, in Reference to *Things lawful, laud-
 able and necessary*: Seeing, in such a Case, the *Perse-
 cuting Party* have by *Right* forfeited their *Right*; and
 the *Backsliding Party* fled from their *Testimony*:
 Therefore the more *Faithful* and better *Part* may do
 for themselves in that *Juncture*.

Secondly, As for the principal and most material Part
 of the *Testimony*, to wit, The *Disowning* of *Charles the
 Second*; we distinguish between a *judicial* and *authorita-
 tive Deposing*, and a *private, lawful, and necessary Dis-
 ownning*, and refusing any more to own him in a *Magi-
 stratical Relation* over us, for ourselves, and all who ad-
 here unto and consent with us in our *Declaration* against
 him, as *Head of the Malignants*. The former we alto-
 gether deny to be done by us, the latter we have done,
 and own it as our *Duty*; and that because of these *Rea-
 sons* expressed in the *Declaration*, and hinted above, p.
 20, 21. chiefly for this in the *Complex*, (which com-
 prehends all) 'That he had inverted all the *Ends* of the
 ' *Government*, and everted and perverted *Religion*,
 ' *Laws*, and *Liberties*, which he was obliged to main-
 ' tain, both by his *Office* and *Trust*, and by the super-
 ' added *Tie* and *Obligation* of sacred and solemn *Oaths*
 ' and *Covenants*. By breaking which, he had ruined
 ' and razed the very *Foundations*, upon which both his
 ' *Right* to govern, and the *Peoples Allegiance* were
 ' founded, and thereby he had loosed the *People* from
 ' all *Obligation* to own his *Authority*.' For the *Ar-
 ticles* and *Conditions* agreed upon, and mutually cove-
 nanted unto betwixt a *People*, and the *Person* or *Persons*
 whom they intrust to rule over them for their *Good*,
 are the only *fundamental Laws*, whereupon the *Ruler*

Right

Right to govern, and the Peoples Obligation to obey, are founded, and which continues and regulates the Relation of each to other, in their respective Spheres and Duties; and no Laws, divine or human, does oblige one Party to the Performance of a mutual Condition to the other, while the other does not mutually observe nor perform his to them. And because he had usurped and exercised that sacrilegious Supremacy.

Thirdly, As for the War there declared in Expressions to this purpose, ' We declare a War against such a Tyrant and Usurper, and all the Men of his Practices, as Enemies to our Lord Jesus Christ, his Cause, and Covenants, and against all such as have any way strengthened him, sided with, or acknowledged him in his Usurpation, Civil and Ecclesiastick, or shall acknowledge any other in the like Usurpation and Tyranny.' For understanding whereof, and our Minds concerning the same, we offer these few Things to be considered.

I. We have ingenuously inserted the Words, as they most frequently occur in the most common Copies, capable of the worst Sense that usually is put upon them; though we have found some far otherwise, and more favourably worded, and which probably seem more like the Authors genuine Expressions and Meaning: And we cannot conceal how we have observed the only Alteration in the Copies of that Paper to be in that extensive Declaration of War; which gives us some Ground to Jealousy, that some Industry had not been wanting to misrepresent them.

II. We will not offer to put a determinate Sense upon the Author's Words, who we are confident had an honest Intention, though their Expressions (if these be their Expressions) cannot bear an ordinary Sense without Exceptions; only we are free to signify in what Sense we allow them. We distinguish therefore between a declaring of a Hostile War and Martial Insurrection, and declaring a War of Contradiction and Opposition by Testimonies, &c. As for the former, we look upon that only to be declared against the Tyrant, and such as should rise with him in Arms, mustering themselves under his Banner, displayed against the Cause and People of God, for destroying

ing the *Covenanted Work of Reformation*, and extirpating all the Owners thereof: But as for the latter, we cannot but think, that is declared against, all such as any way strengthen, side with, or acknowledge the said Tyrant, or any other in the like *Tyranny and Usurpation, Civil or Ecclesiastick*; nor that we would martially oppose and rise up against all such, but that by our Profession, Practice, and Testimony, we would contradict and oppose them, and their Profession and Practice, as to that Thing.

III. We positively disown, as horrid Murder, *the killing of any, because of a different Persuasion and Opinion from us*; albeit some have invidiously cast this odious Calumny upon us, from this extensive Declaration of War: For against the latter Sort, to wit, *such as acknowledge the Usurper, or any way side and strengthen him*, and do not rise in a hostile manner under his Banner, no killing is intended at all. But,

IV. We maintain it as both righteous and rational, in Defence of our Lives, Liberties and Religion, after an orderly and Christian Manner, to endeavour by all Means lawful and possible, to defend ourselves, rescue our Brethren, and prevent their Murder, in a martial Opposition against wicked Persecutors, who are daily seeking to destroy them and us, and imbrue their Hands in our Blood, according to the true Import of the *Apologetical Declaration*, whereby this at *Sanquhar* is confirmed and explained.

Secondly, As to the *Declaration* published at *Lanerk*, from what has been already said, our Minds of it may be plainly understood; howbeit, to remove Mistakes, we offer these things particularly to be considered,

I. We look not upon it as a *judicial or authoritative Action*, but as a *Declaration of a poor oppressed Community, necessitated to that manner of contending for their covenanted Privileges*, confirming and approving the Preceding at *Sanquhar*, and as a *Testimony against the preceeding packed and prelimited Parliament convocate by Charles II.* wherein the *Duke of York* did preside as his Commissioner; and against all their iniquous Acts and Laws.

particularly that abominable *Test*, and every thing done by them at that Time against the *Cause of God*.

II. But considering some *Expressions* in the foresaid Declaration to be very exceptionable; such as, the attributing to the Publishers of the *Sanquhar* Declaration the Title of a *Convention of Estates*, and in other *Expressions* seeming to appropriate Authority to its own Authors; therefore we do hereby acknowledge, that such Names and Stiles are not applicable to us, and therefore inexpediently and unadvisedly inserted in our Declarations; so we pass from the Defence of the same, resolving to use Names and Titles in all Time hereafter, that may be duly and truly applied to us, in the Circumstances wherein we may stand.

III. Notwithstanding of this; we adhere unto the Testimony then and there given, as not improper for, or inconsistent with Persons in our Capacity to give it, tho' we wanted the Concurrence of great ones. For we think indeed great Men, when faithful, are great Helps, and fit Instruments under God, for promoting the common Cause, but their simple Absence doth not altogether incapacitate or invalidate the faithful Endeavours of a Remnant, adhering to the Reformation, and keeping their Integrity, to maintain and promote the same, in such Circumstances as we in this Land are in: For this is our radical Right, and not the Donative of Princes, or Dependent of Greatness. At the furthest, great Men are for the Well-being, not simply necessary for the Being of Armies, Commonwealths or Societies: we mean those who are strictly called the *first* or *Nobles of the Kingdom* by Birth, and not ennobled by Qualifications and Endowments. Indeed where Excellency of Virtue and Nobility of Blood meet together, the Persons are much to be preferred; but simple Birth gives little Right.

IV. When we desire of others a formal and explicate Consent unto these publick Declarations, we only desire their Consent and Agreement, not with every incident Expression and Word (as these foresaid Stiles) but with the intentional Scope, and the things themselves materially and substantially considered, and that chiefly, because antecedently to our Action, these things which are

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the Matter of the Testimony are bound upon all, both Divinely by the Word of God, and Ecclesiastically by our *Church-constitutions*, and by the *superadded and subjective Bond of our holy Covenants*; that so, in the *Prosecution of the Lord's Cause*, we may be of one Mind and Practice: For, except we be joined in *one thing*, as to the *Heads of our stated Testimony* (especially in this confused and disturbed State of Affairs) we cannot strengthen, but rather weaken one anothers Hands.

H E A D III.

Concerning the first Joint and written Call given to the Ministers.

THere is another Brand put upon us, of *imposing sinful and unlawful Restrictions and Impositions upon Ministers*; the Occasion whereof is taken from the first Call given to the Ministers: therefore we desire these things to be considered concerning it.

I. That Call when it was concluded, was not condemned unto by all of us, some still opposing the same.

II. When better considered a little afterwards, it was found several Ways dissatisfactory, and in some things unsound; whereupon it was immediately retracted, even by the next General Meeting, and never more owned by us; but all the Copies (so far as was possible) desired to be called in again: which was publicly and frequently told, when we had our Conference with some Ministers about several things in Controversy. Hence there can be no Ground of objecting it unto us now.

But as to Impositions and unjust Conditions, *Restrictions and Qualifications*, which we are said to impose upon Ministers and Professors: for removing of that heavy Imputation, and satisfying of doubting and well-meaning Persons, as it was publicly told in the Face of the Meeting, *January 28th 1686*, (together with several other things, preceeding and following in this Vindication, in the Conference with some Persons who are now gone out from us; So now we ingenuously pro-

less and declare, *That we require nothing, either of Ministers or Professors, but that which, antecedently to our humble Desire, is bound over both upon them and us, in our Places and Stations, Divinely, by the Authority of God's Word, and Ecclesiastically, by the subordinate Authority of our Church-Constitutions.* Therefore, what we require Consent and Agreement unto, let it be first brought unto the *Word of God*, which is *the only Rule of Faith and Manners*, and compared with the *laudable Degrees of Reformation* already attained unto, according to our *Covenants and Church-Constitutions* founded upon the same Word; and if it be not agreeable thereunto, expressed therein, or necessarily consequential therefrom, let it be rejected; but if consonant thereunto, let no Man call it our sinful Imposition or Restriction.

H E A D IV.

Concerning that heavy, though false Charge, of casting off the Ministry, and Schismatical Separation from the Ministers of the Church of Scotland.

IN the next place, being aspersed with Schism, and unwarrantable Separation from the Ministers of the Church of Scotland: yea, with that odious and heavy Charge of casting off the Ministry thereof: therefore, tho' the Theme be most unpleasant, and Matter of Sorrow to us, to speak on such a lamentable Subject, and neither our Desire nor Credit to discover our Mother's Nakedness; yet we are necessitated, for Vindication of Truth, and taking off such a Calumny, to touch a little this sad and intricate Head: In Prosecution whereof, according to our weak and mean Capacities, we shall speak a little to these few things: First, *We shall make mention of some Distinctions, which in some measure may conduce to the clearing of the Case, and more easy solving of Difficulties relating to our Practice.* Secondly, *We shall shew some things, which we look upon as insufficient in point of withdrawing from Ministers, even within this covenanted Land.* Thirdly, *We shall shew some Grounds, which we look upon to be sufficient for withdrawing (in a Case*

Case of such Differences, and so circumstantiated) from Ministers of this Church, to whom they are applicable, who are obliged to maintain with us in their Places and Stations the same Word of Testimony. Fourthly, We shall shew what we judge to be required, according to the written Word of God, our Church-Constitutions, and our Covenants, in Ministers whom we are to countenance, own and embrace in the present Circumstances. Fifthly, We shall propose some things by way of Caution, in order to the pre-occupying of Objections, and further declaring of our Minds.

As to the first, we shall distinguish,

I. Between a Church in her *Infancy*, and growing up into Reformation; and an *adult* Church, which hath arrived at a higher pitch of Reformation: in the former many things may be tolerated, which may not in the latter; and therefore our Fathers might have born with many things in Ministers, which we cannot, because we have been reformed from these things, which they were not.

II. We distinguish between a Church in a *growing* Case, coming forward out of Darkness, and *advancing* in Reformation; and a Church *declining* and going back again: In the former, many things may be born with, which in the latter are noways to be yielded unto; as in the time of the former *Prelacy*, many did hear *Prelatical* Men, which now we cannot do, and so in other things.

III. We distinguish between a Church in a *reformed* and *settled* State, and confirmed with the *Constitutions of General Assemblies*, and the *Civil Sanction of Acts of Parliament*, and a Church in a *broken* and *disturbed* State: In the former, *Abuses and Disorders* can be orderly redressed and removed by Church-Judicatories; but not so in the latter: wherefore the most lawful Expedient, and conducive Mean, for maintaining the *attained unto Reformation*, is to be followed in the Time of such Confusions and Disturbances; and that is (as we think) *Abstraction*, and withdrawing from such Disorders in Ministers, which we cannot otherwise get rectified.

IV. We distinguish between a reformed Church enjoying her *Privileges and Judicatories*, and a reformed Church

Church *denuded* of her *Privileges*, and *deprived* of her *Judicatories*: In the former, People are to address themselves unto Church *Judicatories*, and not to withdraw from their *Ministers* (especially for ordinary *Scandals*) without making prior *Application* to these; but in the latter, when *Ministers* are really scandalous (though not juridically declared so) and duly censurable according to the *Word of God*, and their own *Church's Constitutions*, and *Censures* cannot be inflicted through the want of *Church-Judicatories*, and yet they still persist in their offensive *Courses*, People may do what is competent to them, and testify their Sense of the justness of the *Censure* to be inflicted, by withdrawing from such *Ministers*, even without the *Presbyterial Sentence*.

V. We distinguish between the *Ministry* in the *Abstract*, or the *Office* itself, which is *Christ's Institution*; and the *Ministers* in the *Concert*, or the *Persons* invested with the *Office*; so albeit the *Ministry* can by no Means be disowned, without the highest *Rebellion* against *God*, and rejecting of *Man's Salvation*; yet such *Ministers* (that belong to the *Presbyterial Church of Scotland*) against whom there are solid and just *Exceptions*, according to the *Word of God*, and the *Acts of the General Assemblies*, striking against them (persisting in their *Courses*) even unto *Deposition*, may be withdrawn from by *People*, who would rightly see to the approving of themselves faithful in their *Stations* unto *God*.

VI. We distinguish between a *faithful* and a *sinless* *Ministry*: The former we have ground to expect, but in no case the latter; and for the want of the former *Qualifications* we have ground to withdraw, that is, when they are not faithful; but from none, because they are not sinless.

VII. As to what we require of unfaithful *Ministers* before we can join with them, we distinguish between *Ministers* condemning doctrinally, and confessing privately by Conference with offended Brethren, or resenting to them after some more publick Manner their *Defections* and *Offences*: and their confessing these *Ecclesiastically* before *Church-Judicatories*, and submitting to their just and equal *Censures*. The former we judge sufficient in the

the present Circumstances; howbeit, we confess that the latter, if afterward they be called unto it, should not be refused and denied, when there shall be any Judicatory to require it.

VIII. We distinguish between a Separation *negative*, whether *actively* or *passively* considered; and a Separation *positive*. A *positive Separation* is, when a Party not only leaves Communion with a Church, whereunto they were formerly joined in Christian and Ministerial Duties; but also gathers up new distinct Churches, different from the former in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government. A *negative passive Separation* is, when the better Part of a Church, standing still and refusing to follow and concur with the backsliding Part of the same Church, after they have become obstinate in their Declinings from former sound Principles and Practices, holds closely by, and adheres unto what Parts of Reformation were graciously attained among them. Separation *negative* and *active* respects the declining Part of the Church, who have deserted their faithful Brethren, and after brotherly Admonition refuse to return, but hold on their new Course. Hence, as for us, we absolutely deny a *positive Separation* from the *Scottish covenanted Church*; yea also *Separation negative*, if it be considered *actively* at the furthest: Herein we acknowledge a *Separation negative*, *passively* considered, in our being left alone (at first, in the time of our greatest Straits) and forsaken by the rest: for we are endeavouring to our utmost (with many Failings and much Weakness) to retain and maintain, according to our Station and Capacity, the *covenanted Work of Reformation of the Church of Scotland*, against Popery, Prelacy, *Erastianism*, and *Sectarianism* both more refined and more gross, together with *Schism* and *Defection*: so we deny, and altogether disown a Separation from Communion with this Church, in her Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, as she was in her best and purest Days: For we only oppose the Transgressions and Defections of this Church, and endeavour to separate from these; while we chuse to stand still, and not go alongst with others in declining and offensive Courses, but to follow the Footsteps of such faithful

faithful Ministers and Professors, as have gone before us, witnessing in their Places and Stations, against both Tyranny and Apostasy, until Defections be condemned and Offences removed.

As to the *Second*, viz. What we judge *insufficient* in point of withdrawing from Ministers and Members of this covenanted Church.

I. *Infirmities* or *Weakness*, whether natural, spiritual, or moral, are not sufficient to found a withdrawing, even from Ministers of this covenanted Church: Natural Weakness is the Infirmary of Parts, Knowledge, Courage, and the like; which Infirmities are disadvantageous to them that labour under them, but in such Things (if there be not altogether an Ineptitude to teach, or Ignorance incapacitating them for the Discharge of their Duty) *We ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak*, Rom. xv. 1. under which Rule, Ministers also must be comprehended; *spiritual* Weakness is the Weakness of Grace, Faith, Love, Zeal, Patience, and the like; as when we perceive some Evidences of Misbelief, Coldness, Security, Impatience, or some risings of Passion, and the like, we must not cast at one another for such Things, *but with all Lowliness and Meekness, with long Suffering, forbear one another in Love*, Eph. iv. 2. Especially when such Things are mourned over and wrestled against. *Moral Infirmities* and *Failings*, are such Evils as Men fall into through the *Stress of Temptation, in Time of Persecution, Satan's Suggestions, &c.* Being either *Sins of Ignorance*, or *personal Escapes* not allowed, or such as the Person hath been hurried into by a surprising Temptation out of Fear, which otherwise he durst not, nor would he have done, if he had been himself: For tho', *We ought to reprove one another for these Things, and not suffer them to ly upon our Brother*; yet we must not disjoin from one another upon that Account, but *restore such an one in the Spirit of Meekness, when overtaken in a Fault, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted*, Gal. vi. 1. Such being but fainting Fits lamented over, and not persisted in nor allowed. Consequently we understand not hereby *scandalous Omissions and Commissions*, done deliberately, and with a high Hand, or palpable and

and gross Abominations; seeing such Things, coming within the Compass of Church Censure, ought to come under another Consideration, and the Persons for these Transgressions discountenanced, ay and while the Scandal given be removed by confessing and forsaking.

II. *Difference in Judgment* is not sufficient to found a *withdrawing*, if it be either in Things *indifferent* in their own Nature, which may be done, or not done, after this Manner, or after another, without any Breach of a divine Precept: Such things, 'tis true, may be made *inexpedient*, and may become Matter of stumbling to a weak Brother; therefore in these we must be fully persuaded in our own Minds, and also *observe the Rules of Charity* carefully, *not to offend any of Christ's little ones*: All things indeed are pure, but it is Evil for any to do them with Offence, *It is good not to do any Thing, whereby our Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak*, Rom. xiv. 20, 21 Or if it be in Things that are not *Material*, or not the *Word of Patience*, and Matter of Testimony; for in such Things, these who are stronger, and more knowing, *ought to receive the weak, but not to doubtful Disputations*, Rom xiv. 1. Nor that which follows upon the former, *to wit*, every *Difference in Practice*, according to the Judgment and Light of Conscience, in Things that are not *disorderly*: For though we could not allow such a Thing in ourselves, yet it ought not to hinder our joining, but whereto we have already attained, *we ought to walk by the same Rule, and mind the same Thing, hoping if in any Thing any be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto them*, Phil. iii. 15, 16. It is evident, we mean not here such Things as are Parts of the Testimony, wherein of Necessity there must be some Oneness in Judgment and Practice.

III. We conceive that *Ignorance of Matter of Fact*, when nothing else can be charged, ought not to hinder joining; that is, if our Brethren either know not what we hold as our Testimony, or have been misinformed concerning Principles or Practices: In that Case, we hold it our Duty to use all Diligence to inform such as have had no Occasion to know the Matter of the present

sent Testimony, and with all due Patience to wait upon them.

IV. Such *circumstantial* and *controversial* Points, which were never *ecclesiastically* reformed by our Church in her best and purest Times, nor *doctrinally* condemned, and witnessed against by any of the faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ, according to the Word of God, since by *Tyranny and Apostasy* our Church began to decline from her wonted Zeal and Purity, will not hinder our joining with them.

V. Nor any such Points of *Controversy* of lesser Moment, which may be incident among Christians, overturning no Part of the Churches Testimony against *Papery, Prelacy, Erastianism, Sectarianism*, together with *Defection, Schism, and Error*.

VI. Even *real Scandals*, not attended with *Obstinacy*, but confessed, mourned over, and forsaken, are not sufficient in Point of withdrawing.

As to the *Third*, We shall plainly lay down these Grounds which we look upon as *sufficient* for withdrawing (especially in the Case of such Differences, and so circumstantiated) from Ministers to whom they are applicable, who are obliged by *holy Covenants*, and as Ministers of the same organical Church, to own and maintain the same Word of Testimony with us: Which Grounds of withdrawing from Ministers, whether nominal or real; we shall deduce from that Fountain which we desire to make the constant unerring Rule of our Practice, the holy Scriptures of Truth, wherein we find such Precepts, Admonitions, Reproofs, Threatnings, and Examples, as without any strained Consequence, must determine us to a resolved withdrawing from all these following, whom we do not, nor cannot join with in the Exercise of their Ministry, in the Case so circumstantiated, and for Confirmation, shall back the same with the approved subordinate Rule of the *Acts* and *Constitutions* of our general Assemblies, as they occur. Permitting only in the Entry two Generals, that we be not mistaken, first, Our Scope here; is to give Account upon what Grounds we are constrained, as the Case now stands in this broken State of the Church, to withdraw from, Dis-

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countenance, and maintain a *negative, passive Separation*, from these whom we love in the Lord, and acknowledge to be Ministers of this Church, with whom we sometimes had sweet Fellowship, while they were faithful in their Masters work, and with whom again we would desire to have communion in Ordinances, if these our just exceptions were removed: But we shall mention others also, that our mind in this Head may be fully known. 2. We desire to be understood to walk and build our grounds upon these solid principles in *Thesi*, which we think will not readily be rejected in the general. (1) We can join with none but such as we must acknowledge (as they desire to be accounted) *Ministers of Christ*, set over by the Holy • Ghost, and *Faithful Stewards of the Mysteries of God*, and that then and there, when and where we join with them, 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. (2) We can join with none but such as we must own *Church Communion* with, in all the Ordinances administrated by them, both as to matter and manner, and right of administration, then and there: So that if a Minister either want a Right to administrate, or be wrong as to the matter or the manner of dispensing any of the Ordinances of Christ, not according to his Institution, we can have communion with him in none. For in our joining with them in Ordinances, we must own and take on that *Tessera*, and *Sign of our Incorporation with them in their fellowship*: For, when we partake of the bread, we become one Bread and one Body, and they that eat of the Sacrifice are partakers of the Altar, 1 Cor. x. 7, 8.

Hence, (3.) We can join with none, but such as we can conscientiously approve in the circumstantiate way of his dispensing Ordinances, as it must be regulated by the Word; for otherways, suppose a thing might be lawful materially, yet circumstances may make it sinful, and a countenancing of it so circumstantiated doth infer a communion in these circumstances that make it so sinful. *They that eat of the Sacrifice are partakers of the Altar*, and if the altar be not of God's approbation, the sacrifice lawful cannot justify the eaters: *An Idol is nothing, and that which is offered in Sacrifice to Idols is nothing, yet they who eat of it when they know it is so circumstantiated, have fellowship with Devils*, 1 Cor. x.

8, 19, 20, 21. And it is called Idolatry, compare verse 4. And consequently, (4) we can join with none, with whom we must in our countenancing of them partake of their evil deeds, and make ourselves *in the righteous Judgment of God*, obnoxious to their punishments. And therefore, where we know Persons guilty of such things, as we find they are branded with, who are under a recorded sentence of dreadful punishment, both against them and their partakers, we think it is as sufficient a ground and necessary to withdraw from them, as if we had an express command for it; for then, *we are not be partakers with them, nor have fellowship with these unfruitful works*, that we must reprove, and that we find, that the Lord reproveth and condemns, Eph. v. 11. *Left in partaking of their sins, we receive of their plagues*, Rev. xviii. 4. (5) We can join with none, whose sin we may be interpreted to homologate, either in their entry to, or discharge of their Office, or which might be so looked upon as a Test of our submission to them, or badge of our compliance with them, or sign of our approbation of their sin, directly or indirectly. For in our joining in worship or Church communion, we must advert to what it may be interpreted either in Law, or in our own and others Consciences: For to that we must also have special respect, lest we offend and stumble others, as well as our own Consciences; some things must be forbore, not only for our own uncleanness, but out of respect to the Conscience of others; *Conscience, I say, not our own but of others; for why is our liberty judgment of another man's Conscience*, 1 Cor. xxviii. 29. (6) We can join with none, from whom a Church duly constituted, invested with the orderly Power of Christ, and in capacity to exercise and improve it, would enjoin us to withdraw. For, though we do not take upon us a Presbyterial or Synodical Church power, to inflict Juridical Church censures upon them that deserve them: yet we think this in our capacity and discretive Judgment, incumbent upon us, to wit, according as we know they would manifestly incur the sentence of *Excommunication, Deposition, Deprivation, Suspension or Rebuke*, according to the degrees of their Offence, after rejected

admonitions: We may by our Discountenance, testify our dislike of their ways, not inflicting this as a censure, but signifying hereby our sense of the moral obligation, and equity of these censures when Legally inflicted. For though none have *the power of the Keyes* but Church Officers; yet people have a discrete power over their own practice, anticipating that power where it cannot be in Christ's Method exerted: Which Hypothesis being premitted, the Grounds we lay down for withdrawing from Ministers are these,

I. We find, These are not to be acknowledged as Christ's Ambassadors, by hearing or receiving Ordinances from them, who either, *never had a Call to Preach* or *never were clothed with Christ's Commission, in his orderly appointed way*, but took it up, either by *Usurpation beyond their Sphere*, or pretend an *insufficient Mission*, which they cannot clearly instruct, or have it only from them who have none themselves to give. For we dare hear none that run unsent, for *how shall they preach except they be sent?* Rom. x. 15. We dare hear none, with whom the Lord hath not promised his Countenance and Concurrence but hath threatned they shall not profit us, Jer. xxiii. 22. We dare hear none of the Thieves and Robbers that enter not by the door, but climb up some other way, but we are ambitious to have, and keep the mark of Christ's sheep, and followers that will not follow strangers John x. 15. And upon this Ground, we withdraw from all Popish Priests, that have their Mission from Antichrist: From all Prelatick Curates, that have theirs from the Episcopal Hierarchy, which is also Antichristian: And also from gifted Brethren who preach at their own hands or have their Mission from the people.

II. We Judge these are not to be owned or countenanced in their Administration of Ordinances, who either have subjected their Ministry to the disposal of *strange Lords*, by laying it aside in obedience to their Mandates or taking a new potestative mission from them: Or they pretend to keep their old one, which they had from Christ in his Legal and appointed way, yet they have consented to take a *new holding* from and upon a new architectonick usurped power, and Headship in the church

ercise of it, by accepting a new Grant, Licence, and Warrant from the Usurpers of their Master's Crown. We dare not homologate such an affront to the prerogative Royal of our only Kingly Lawgiver, who sent them to negotiate a Treaty of peace with us, in giving them the Respect of his Ambassadors, after they have so foully broken their instructions, and become servants of men, and subjects even in Ministerial Functions to another Head than Christ. We dare have no *more meddling with such Changelings* in things that they and we dare not come and go upon, *Prov. xxiv. 21.* We dare not partake with such *Prophets*, as so evidence themselves to be *light and treacherous Persons*, who have so palpably betrayed their Trust (and so great a Trust as that) that was committed to them; nor with such *Priests*, as *have polluted the Sanctuary, and done Violence to the Law* of their princely Master; *lest the just Lord* (who is in the midst of us, and will resent this unparalleled Indignity) *bring forth his Judgment, and make us partake with them*, as being so accessory if we so own them, *Zeph. iii. 4, 5.* We cannot countenance them who so corrupted the Covenant of *Levi*, by misregarding the Honour of him who called them to be his Messengers, by departing out of the way, and causing many to stumble at the Law; for which Cause they are in holy Justice deservedly made contemptible and base before all the People, according as they have not kept his ways, and have been partial in the Law, *Mal. ii. 7, 8, 9.* We cannot join in Worship with these, who either teach for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, Figments of Mens Traditions, or teach true Doctrine by the Commandments of Men, suspending their Function, and depending in the Exercise of it, upon Mens Authority; for both are vain, and both are Plants which shall be rooted up: And, in Reference to both, we reckon ourselves under that Command, *Let them alone, blind Guides*, *Marth. xv. 9, 13, 14.* And, upon this Ground, in this broken and declining State of the Church, not only do we withdraw from these old Presbyters, now turned *Curates*, who conformed to *Prelacy*; not only from such Ministers, who submitted to their Deposition by the

Act of Glasgow, and never avouched publickly their ministerial Exercise since, though privately they would preach now and then; not only from those Ministers, who have consented to the giving of a Bond not to exercise their Ministry for longer or shorter Time, as many of the indulged have done; but, upon this complex Ground, we withdraw from all the *indulged* Ministers, who have embraced any of the Christ dishonouring, and Church destroying *Indulgencies*, obtruded upon this reformed Church to divide and destroy, rend and ruin the Remnant thereof by an insulting Enemy, who had broken down our covenanted Work of Reformation, usurped the Prerogatives of Christ, and set themselves down in his mediatory Chair, arrogating and claiming a Pre-eminency, or wicked Supremacy over his House. The Sinsfulness of which *Indulgence*, we shall not now decypher; but it may be evident, from their Derivation from that arrogated *Supremacy*, from the gross Perjury and Breach of Covenants committed by the embracing thereof, from their dividing the Accepters from the Duties and Sufferings of the Church, and her Ordinances, as to manner of Administration, and from their being the Mother of all our Divisions, and tending to suppress and bury the covenanted Work of Reformation.

III. We judge we have sufficient Ground to withdraw from all these, who *pervert* and corrupt their Ministry, by preaching and maintaining *Errors*, either in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline or Government, contrary to the Scriptures, and our Confessions, and Principles of our *covenanted Reformation*, and contradictory to our present Testimony, founded thereupon, and agreeable thereunto. Hence, not only must we withdraw from these Ministers, that maintain Errors fundamental, overturning the Doctrine of Salvation; but, in this broken and declining State of the Church, from all these also that oppugn and withstand our common Confession of all Orthodox Truths received by the Church of *Scotland*, or maintain Errors condemned thereby, or condemn Truths maintained thereby: And now in the Case circumstantiated, from all that contradict, oppose, or overturn the Matter of the Church of *Scotland's* Testimony, and do desert, deny

deny or pervert the Word of Christ's Patience given her now to contend for. For, as to the first Sort, we are commanded, if any seek to *turn us away from the Lord our God*, to put away that Evil, and not to consent and hearken to any that will entice us to Error or Idolatry, *Deut. xiii. 5. 7.* And in perilous Times, especially when Impostors do abound, we are commanded to *turn away from such, how specious soever their Forms be*, 1 Tim. iii. 5, &c. And a Man that *that is an Heretick* (be who he will) *after the first and second Admonition, we must reject at all times*, Tit. iii. 10. So also we must, without Respect or Exception, observe these general Rules, concerning Teachers of Errors or Contradiçers of Truth: *We must cease to bear the Instruction that causeth to err from the Words of Knowledge*, whatever these Words be, especially if they be Words of Christ's Patience, *Prov. xix. 27.* We must withdraw from these Leaders, that will *cause us to err*, by leading into Snares, or perverting the right Ways of the Lord, or cause us decline any way to the Right-hand or to the left from any of his Truths: *For we are afraid of the Threatning to be destroyed*, even though the Error be not fundamental, *Isa. ix. 16.* We must mark them who *contradict the Doctrine which we have learned* (whatever it be) *from the Law and the Testimony, and avoid them*, Rom. xvi. 17. If any Man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godliness, especially that Point of Doctrine which is deposited to us to contend and suffer for. We must look upon him as a proud perverse Disputer, (if he refuse Information) and must withdraw ourselves from such, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 5. If there come any, and bring not this Doctrine, though he were never so sound in other things, yet if he bring Doctrine contradictory to this, that Christ hath given us the Word of his Patience, we must not receive him, nor bid him God speed in that Work of his, preaching or practising against any of the Truths we have received, 2 Joh. x, 11. Now, upon this very comprehensive Ground, we withdraw not only from gross Hereticks and Sectarians, and Malignant Prelatists, and such as run into wild Extravagancies

gancies upon the Right-hand, passing over the *Bounds of holy Truth*, and doing Injury to the *covenanted Work of Reformation*, leading People out of the Way, and rending the Bowels of the Church.

But, in this broken and declining State, even from many Presbyterian Ministers, who have overturned a great Part of our Church's Testimony; which, as it is now both stated and owned by us, is of greatest Importance, concerning no less than the great Prerogatives of God, the supreme Lord and King of all the World, in his Kingdom of Power, usurped and encroached upon by Tyranny, brought in and established instead of his Ordinance of Magistracy; and also the Royal Prerogatives of Christ our Lord and Mediator, in his Kingdom of Grace, invaded by the blasphemous *Supremacy*, overturning all the Church's Liberties, than which nothing greater can concern us to contend for, either as we are Men, or as we are Christians, and which have been signally sealed by the Blood of many Martyrs, who in laying down their Lives for this Testimony, have been singularly countenanced of the Lord: yet, we say, by many of our Ministers. this in a great measure hath been deserted and perverted, by their condemning the Martyrs that died for it, as well as us, who have desired to witness for it, by their homologating the Supremacy; by their owning and approving, or preaching and perswading it to be Duty to own and approve the pretended Authority (really Tyranny) of Charles II. and James VII. disowned in the Declarations published at *Sanquhar*, first and last, and at *Lanerk*; which Declarations have been condemned, even materially and substantially, in so far as they disown the pretended Authority of these Tyrants. Howbeit, seeing that we have publicly disowned that so called Authority, for ourselves; and all who will adhere unto us in that Deed; and seeing it is a Part of our stated Testimony, and unto us confirmed by sufficient Reasons, to be both lawful and necessary, we cannot reverse it, nor concur with others who overturn it, because where there is a Difference in the stated Testimony, the publick Work cannot be jointly carried on.

IV. We judge we have sufficient Ground to withdraw

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from Ministers, guilty of gross Compliances with the
 publick Enemies of this covenanted and reformed Church
 and Nation, who have broken the Covenant, destroyed
 the Reformation, and are still by all Means seeking the
 Extirpation of all the Owners of the Cause of God. Com-
 pliiances with such have a great Charge, and are liable
 to a grievous Sentence; and if we should countenance in
 our Communion Persons so chargeable, we should incur
 a heavy Censure from the Lord. For this Abiathar was
 thrust from the Priesthood, because he complied with Adoni-
 jah the Usurper, 1 Kings, i. 7. compared with 1 Kings,
 iii. 27. 'Tis Time now we were scared from all Com-
 pliiances, after we have felt the smart of them from sad
 Experience. And should we again break his Command-
 ments, and join in Affinity with the People of these Abomi-
 nations, would he not be angry with us until he had con-
 sumed us, so that there should be no Remnant nor escaping,
 Ezra ix. 14. We dare not partake with them, for fear
 of inveigling ourselves in their Snares, and involving our-
 selves in their Guilt and Judgment; for by their Ex-
 ample, if not by their Doctrine, they may cause us to
 err, and engage us to all the countenancing they require
 of us of their practical Errors, which we dare not do,
 but must stand aloof, and witness our Detestation of
 them, and neither directly nor indirectly, formally nor
 interpretatively approve their Sin: but, on the contrary,
 we must homologate the Equity of their Censure ap-
 pointed by the Lord, and which would be inflicted by
 the Church, if constitute in Order and Power. For
 when Israel goes a whoring from God by open and avowed
 Defection, we dare not join in their Wine-offerings, for
 they are not pleasing unto the Lord, and their Sacrifices are
 as the Bread of Mourners, and all that eat thereof shall be
 polluted, Hos. ix. 1, 4. We must have a care not to be
 unequally yoked with such Unrighteousness; but as we
 would be the Temple of God, and have him to dwell
 amongst us, we must come out from among them, and be
 separate, and touch no unclean thing, and then he will re-
 ceive us, 2 Cor. vi. 14, 17. He is now loudly calling to
 us, Depart ye, Depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no
 unclean thing. They should be clean that bear the Vessels
 of

of the Lord, Isa. lii. 11. The Lord we hope hath instructed us better, *That we should not walk in the Way of this People, nor say a Confederacy to them, to whom this People say a Confederacy, nor fear their Fear, but sanctify the Lord, and wait upon him in an abstracted Way* following Duty, though we should be accounted for *Signs and Wonders in Israel*, and branded with Singularity, Isa. viii. 11, 12, 18. And, upon this Ground, in this broken and declining State of the Church, we withdraw from many Ministers of the Church of Scotland: both these that were indulged and not indulged, for their manifold Compliances: such as the Compliances of many Ministers, in countenancing of *abjured, Diocesan, Erastian Prelacy*, by hearing of Curates: and the Compliance of others, in compearing before the tyrannical Courts of Inquisition against the People of God; in subscribing and swearing of Oaths: and in subscribing of Bonds imposed by the Enemies, for debauching of Peoples Consciences, and destroying the Reformation, contrary unto, and inconsistent with the Oaths of our holy Covenants, and contrary unto the Act of the General Assembly, June 28th, 1648, Sess. 18. against all new Oaths and Bonds in the common Cause, without Consent of the Church; and in paying of Impositions, Taxations and Exactions, imposed and required by the Enemies of this Church and Kingdom, whereby they become helping Causes to them in their Wickedness, *making their Bows to abide in Strength. and strengthening the Hands of these Evil-doers.* The like whereof is declared an horrible thing, Jer. xxiii. 14. and also is contrary to the Act of the General Assembly 1646, Sess. 14. whereby *Persons in any Ecclesiastical Office, guilty of the equivalent Degrees of Compliance, are decerned to be suspended from their Office, until all the Exercise thereof, and such Time as the Quality of the Offence, and Condition of the Offender shall be found to deserve; and the Compliance of others any other manner of way, really scandalous, duly censurable, and decerned either expressly or equivalently by our Church-Constitutions, and Acts of our General Assemblies, to deserve Deposition.*

V. We judge we have sufficient Ground to withdraw.

not only from these who are actively and actually guilty of the foresaid Compliances, and involved in gross Steps of Defection: but also from such Ministers who take the *Defence and Patrociny* of these Courses, and palliate and plaister them, and strengthen the Hands, and harden the Hearts of these that are engaged in them, so that none doth turn from such wicked things: which was that horrible thing the Lord saw in the Prophets of *Jerusalem*, for which he threatens *sad things*, and for which he commands *not to hearken to them*, Jer. xxiii. 14, 16. We dare not join with either *Builders* or *Daubers* of such a Work, as is carried on to the Dishonour of Christ, and ruining of Reformation, nor by our Countenance and Concurrence strengthen either Builders or Daubers, *lest we be consumed in the midst thereof*, as we have that Certification, Ezek. xiii. 10, 14. where also a Wo is pronounced *against such as sow Pillows under Armholes, and make Kerchiefs upon the Head of every Stature, and make the Heart of the righteous sad, and strengthen the Hands of the wicked*, vers. 18, 22. We desire to keep ourselves free of having any Hand in that *Conspiracy of the Prophets, like a roaring Lion, ravening the Prey*, and the Priests that violate the Law, and prophane the holy things, and put not Difference between the holy and prophane, and that *daub with untempered Morter, seeing Vanity, and divining Lies*, Ezek. xxii. 25, 28. We cannot reckon ourselves free of this Conspiracy, if we incorporate ourselves with them: and, upon this ground, we hold ourselves obliged, in this broken and declining State of the Church, to withdraw from many Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, who have defended, and do yet defend all or any of the foresaid Compliances, and who vindicate palpable and gross Defections: such as these who plead for and maintain the *Indulgence*, and have gaped after the supposed Privilege thereof, and opposed the inserting the embracing of it amongst the Steps of Defection; and who have taken part with the indulged, and other complying Ministers, against the more faithful; chusing rather to concur with them, than to countenance and encourage the more faithful; and who have met in Presbyteries to censure them, for de-

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claring the Sinfulness of the *Indulgence*, contrary to that Act of our *General Assembly*, August 3d 1648, *Sess.* 26. who have preached in favours of the indulged, and pleaded for Union with them, and who have defended the Peoples taking of the Bonds and Oaths, contrived and tendered to ensnare the Conscience, and have advised Prisoners and others thereunto.

VI. We judge, *Unfaithfulness* in the Exercise of the Ministerial Function, or a smooth flattering general Way of applying the Doctrine to the Time, is a sufficient Ground of withdrawing. For Ministers are commanded to be faithful, and to cry aloud and not spare, shewing Jacob his Sins, &c. *Isa.* lviii. 1. And a Deficiency in this makes them liable to a dreadful and detestable Brand, that they are called by the Spirit of God, *Blind Watchmen*, ignorant, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, *Isa.* lvi. 12. There is a terrible Threatning against such unfaithful Ministers, *Jer.* xiv. 14, 16. Where the Lord declares, *He did not send them to preach that way, and that he would consume them, and the People to whom they prophesied shall be cast out in the Streets, &c.* Therefore we dare not admit them to prophesie to us. Likewise, the Lord takes to himself the Punishment of such who keep not his ways, and are partial in the Law, in making them base and contemptible before all the People, *Mal.* ii. 9. This is a great part of Zion's Misery, when her Prophets see vain and foolish things for her, and do not discover her Iniquity, *Lam.* ii. 14. And upon this Ground we hold ourselves obliged, in this broken and declining State of the Church, to withdraw from many Ministers of the Church of Scotland, who have been unfaithful in forbearing to preach against the Sins of the Times, and palpable Steps of our Defection, and in shunning to declare the whole Council of God, concerning the necessary Duties of our Day, contrary to what a Minister's Commission bears, and contrary to the Act of our *General Assembly*, August 3. 1648. *Sess.* 26. where Ministers so continuing in such Negligence, after Admonition and due Trial of the Offence, are declared to be censurable with Deposition, for being Pleasers of Men rather than Servants of Christ, for giving themselves to a detestable Neutrality, and Indifferency in

in the Cause of God, and for defrauding the Souls of the People : Such Minifters are thefe who have been filent of the abounding Sins and Snares of the Time, forbidden in the Scriptures, condemned by the Acts of our *General Affembly*, and engaged againft by our Covenants; who forgetting the holy Bonds of our Covenants, have defifted from purfuing the Ends thereof: who have not maintained the received Principles of the Church of *Scotland*, nor followed approven and laudable Practices in Minifterial Duties; who have refufed and denied their Concurrence with the more Faithful, in afferting this Church's Testimony; who, inftead of afferting the ancient and honeft Plea of the *Scottifh Covenanters*, againft both *Seftaries* and *Malignants*, in Defence of the *Reformation* and *Presbyterial Government*, according to our Covenants, *National* and *Solemn League*, have taken the Patrocity of, and concurred with finful *Associations*, whereby the State of the Lord's Cause is altered and perverted, and a Door opened to the Introduction of *Seftaries* and *Malignants*, which our worthy Reformers many ways opposed, as may be feen in their Proceedings, Letters and Warnings, and particularly in the *Declaration* of the *General Affembly*, *July* laft, 1648. *Seff.* 21. *Concerning the Danger of Religion, &c.* We find already what Hurt we have incurred, by favouring and inbringing of *Malignants*; and if we fhall continue to do fo, or begin in End to introduce *Seftaries*, what may we expect but utter Confumption from the Holy One? We look upon the Bonds of our Covenants to be fo morally obliging, that the folving of conditional Ties (fuch as the Relation between Magiftrate and People) will not be a fufficient *Salvo* for laying them afide. Though we may explain and add unto them, yet by no means do we judge it lawful to ftate our Quarrel in *Associations*, and by open Declaration upon another *Basis*.

VII We judge we have fufficient Ground to withdraw from Minifters guilty of lying by from the publick Work of preaching the Gospel, and deferting their Minifterial Duty, when the Peoples urgent Necessity, and preffing Call doth make it indifpenfible, when people are deftitute of publick and faithful Warning, in the time
when

when Snares are most abounding, yea, when the poor Flock is in greatest Hazard to be turned aside. For as this is a dreadful Sin, and we are afraid to partake in it, and a sad Wo is denounced against these that are guilty thereof, 1 Cor. ix. 16. And is expressly contrary to that clear Command, to preach the Word, and be instant in season and out of season, 2 Tim. iv. 2. So it is among the Characters of the Hirelings and Strangers, whose Voice Christ's Sheep will not hear, if, when they see the Wolf coming, they leave the Sheep and flee away, John x. 5, 12. Yea, we find Paul refusing to take John Mark with him, because he had departed from them, and went not with them to the Work, Acts xv. 37, 38. This is not according to the Apostles practice, who did not behave themselves so disorderly; for this is to be reckoned and carried towards as a very gross Disorder, when a Minister is so far out of order, that he will not work the Work of the Lord; from such we are commanded to withdraw, 2 Thess. iii. 6, 7, 11, 14. This is far from keeping this Command, without Spot unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. Therefore it is a Disorder that we cannot countenance. And upon this Ground, in this broken and declining State of the Church, we withdraw from many Ministers of the Church of Scotland, who in this Day of Desolation and Famine of the Word, when it was precious, and there was no open Vision, did tender their own Ease and Interest more than Christ's, and lurked and lay by from the necessary Work of preaching the Gospel in the Land, when no physical Impediment did necessitate them thereunto, and poor people were in greatest want of it, and in greatest Hazard to be turned aside, by the Cruelty and Subtilty of Enemies, and the overrunning Extravagancies of others; contrary to Scripture, and contrary to the Tenor of the Advice of the Brethren, deputed for penning the Enormities and Corruptions of the Ministry, allowed by the Church Assembly convened at Edinburgh, 1596, to wit, That Ministers not resident with their Flocks be deposed; and according to the Acts of the General Assembly, otherwise the Burden to be laid on the Presbyteries, and the foresaid Ministers to be censured

ed therefore ; or who left the Land and the Flock committed to their Charges, especially when people were destitute of publick and faithful Warning, in the time of bounding Snares from the right and left Hand, which is also contrary to Scripture, and the foresaid Tenor of the Advice of the Brethren. But we do not here speak of Ministers leaving this Land and Church, with consent of the Church, and when there was little or no Need of their remaining in it, or when they had a sufficient Call to another place, and could either be as useful or more useful there. Neither do we intend this against such, as may at a time leave this Land in the case of extreme Hazard, through fainting Fear, sorrowing for their Weakness, and longing to be restor'd again, and heartily applauding and approving the Faithfulness and Valiantness of other Ministers, unto whom the Lord may give a Spirit more fitted for dangerous and difficult Days.

VIII. We judge schismatical and pragmatistical Dividers of the Church, and Wideners of the Breaches thereof, already broken and divided; and who sow Discords among Brethren, and promote their Contentions by inviolent Reproaches, or otherwise, are to be withdrawn from. Such turbulent Schismaticks were *Korah* and his Company, who affected a Preheminency above their Brethren, and to erect and exalt themselves on their Ruines, and arrogated to be as high in Respect and Esteem as *Moses* and *Aaron*, and degraded from their Dignity, by reproaching them, as taking too much upon them, and lifting up themselves above the Congregation of the Lord, thereby thinking to divide between them and the people; for which Cause, the Lord commands all to separate themselves from that Congregation, *lest they be consumed with them*, *Numb. xvi. 12.* meaning the Congregation of *Korah*, *Dathan*, &c. *Ver. 24.* We are expressly commanded to note such Schismaticks, and mark such Causers of Divisions and Offences, which they effectuate both by their Practice and by their Words, crying up their own party, and informing against the more pure and faithful Remnant, *Rom. xvi. 17, 18.* Such an one was *Diotrephes*, prating against the *Apostles* and the Brethren with malicious Words, and receiving them not, but casting

casting them out; which the Apostle threatens he would
 nimadvert upon, by the Severity of Discipline and condempning
 Sentence, third Epistle of John, ix. 10. Upon which
 Ground, in this broken and declining State of the Church
 not only do we withdraw from the Prelatick Schismaticks
 who have aspired to a predomining Pre-eminency, and ad-
 vanced themselves upon the Ruines of the Church of Scot-
 land; neither only from the Indulged, who have made
 themselves guilty of a formed Schism in and from the
 Church of Scotland; but also from Non-indulged Presbyte-
 rian Ministers, who have widened the Breach, and cast
 Oil into our Flames, by their taking so many Ways to
 crush a poor wasted Remnant, reproaching, misrepresent-
 ing, misinforming, both by Word and Writ, at Home
 and Abroad, against zealous and faithful Contenders and
 Sufferers for Christ; either by condemning them for real
 Duties, and putting the Name of odious Transgression
 thereupon, or imputing heavy Charges and false Accu-
 sations unto them, and that without previous and prere-
 quisite Admonition, and trial of the Verity of these
 Things disowned by them, and whereof they could clear
 and vindicate themselves. Howbeit we speak not this
 from an Invective, or to resent Injuries done to us; for
 we look more to what of this kind hath been done a-
 gainst the valiant and faithful Witnesses of Christ, who
 have gone before us, and sealed his Truths with their
 Blood, and especially unto what prejudice the Cause of
 Christ hath sustained thereby, and how Truth is like to
 be buried under the vile Ashes of Lies and Contempts
 than any thing can be said or done against us.

IX. We Judge Scandalous Disorders and Miscarriages
 in either the Ministerial or Personal walk, Carriage, or
 Conversation of Ministers, are a Sufficient ground to with-
 draw from them. Such were the Profane Scandals of the
 Sons of Eli, which made Men abhorre the offering of the Lord.
 1 Sam. ii. 17. From such Brethren especially (from which
 rule Ministers cannot be exempted, for if they be not
 first our Brethren, they can never be our Ministers) we
 are expressly commanded to withdraw our Company
 if they be Fornicators, or Covetous, or Idolaters, or Railers
 or Drunkards, or Extortioners; to which we may add
 Thieves

Thieves, Cheats, Liars, Cursers, and Swearers, or Profane, Including all the like Scandalous Disorders, 1 Cor. v. 11, Upon which ground, in this broken and declining state of the Church, we do and may withdraw from any Ministers of the Church of Scotland, to whom any of the foresaid Scandals are Really Applicable, for we can have no Fellowship with such unfruitful works of Darknes, Eph. v. 11. Neither dare we be Partakers with them, verse, 7. Howbeit let none look upon this as a Reflection upon Ministers, who are not guilty of such a Charge: For we intend not the Application hereof to any, who are free of such Scandalous Disorders.

Further, what we look upon as Sufficient in point of withdrawing from Ministers of a *Reformed Covenanted Church*, in a broken and declining State, we Judge the Equivalent, so far as they may be applicable, sufficient for grounding a withdrawing from Professors of the same Church, in the same broken and declining state, as to that peculiar Church Communion in *Selected Christian Fellowships*, and *general Correspondencies*, for a joint carrying on of the Publick work and Testimony.

But now when we are shewing what we Judge to be grounds sufficient of withdrawing from Ministers of this *Covenanted and Reformed Church*, in this her broken and declining state, to the end that our minds may be more fully known, and to obviate any unjust suspicion of standing at a distance from Ministers upon insufficient or slender grounds; we shall here, in the *Fourth Place*, declare what we Judge, according to the Written Word of God and our Church Constitutions, to be required in Ministers, whom we will Countenance and embrace as our own.

Therefore our judgement is, that all or any Ministers, whom we are to countenance or embrace, must be clothed with Christ's Commission in his orderly and appointed way, and have a sufficient Call to administrate his Ordinances. So it is needful in the *First Place*, We must be clear as to their Entry and Mission to the Ministry: *For how shall they preach except they be sent?* Which being clear, in the next place, *they must be free of scandal, as to their Ministerial or Personal walk, and of a blameless life and*

and Conversation, according as Paul describes it, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4. (For such as have not this qualification bring the Ordinance of Christ and the sacred office of a Minister into contempt, as the scandals of the Sons of Eli made men to abhorre the Sacrifice of the Lord, and such can have no weight with the people, and cannot expect the presence of God with them) They must also be free of palpable and manifest Defection; For so hath the Lord taught us, expressly, declaring that the Priests the Levites that should come near him, to minister unto him, to stand before him, should be the sons of Zadok that kept the charge of the Sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from him, Ezek. xlv. 15. Yea, we do plainly profess, that we will not separate from any, but heartily hear and cordially countenance all, that are free of these things that we mention as grounds sufficient of withdrawing. But if they be guilty of any steps of scandalous defection through this declining time, we think it necessary, before we can join with them, that they duly resent, confess, and forsake the same. Albeit, we do in no way assume to ourselves the power of censure or Ecclesiastick rebuke; yet we think the persons guilty of these sins, for which a publick and Ecclesiastick rebuke is due, ought in some publick way or other to resent the same, for the honour of God, and the satisfaction of the consciences of the offended; and we hope that no Minister, either free of these things or sensible of the guilt of them, will think this an imposition. For further clearing of what we understand by this, see *Distinction* 8. Further we desire and expect of these Ministers that we can have cleanness to join with, that they must discharge what they have in Commission from Christ faithfully: So Paul charges Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who should Judge the quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom, to Preach the Word, to be instant in season and out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and Doctrine, and to make full proof of his Ministry, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 5. And also gives him charge in the sight of God, that he should keep the Commandment without spot unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. And exhorts him to keep that good thing that

I Tim. 2 Tim. i. 14. Likeways the
 apostle exhorts Titus, to speak the things which become
 sound Doctrine, in all things shewing himself a pattern of good
 works, in Doctrine, shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
 sound speech that cannot be condemned, Titus ii. 1, 7, 8.
 Therefore they must take up the right state of the Lord's
 Cause against both right and left hand opposites, and
 maintain the present Testimony, and condemn and preach
 down the present Defections, and propagate the receiv-
 ed Principles of the Church of Scotland, according to the
 Word of God, the Constitutions of our Church, and the Oath
 of holy Covenants: Otherways they do but desert and
 pervert the Word of Christ's Patience; and are men of
 corrupt minds, perverse disputers, 1 Tim vi. 5. Now we
 are confident, that none but such as are blinded with
 prejudice, will for this say, that we prescribe rules
 to Ministers; for there is nothing here required,
 but that which is bound upon them by the divine
 Authority of God in the Scriptures, and the Eccle-
 siastick Authority of our Church in the Acts of our
 General Assemblies. And therefore, however we be
 reproached, as that we have cast off all the Mini-
 sters of the Church of Scotland, and will hear none of
 them. We indeed profess withdrawing from such of
 them, as practically contraveen these Rules, and to whom
 the forementioned Grounds of withdrawing are appli-
 cable; yet here we declare, that if any Minister will
 come forth, or wherever we can find any Minister so
 qualified, that is, clothed with Christ's Commission,
 righteousness and Salvation, free of Scandals, ministerial
 and personal, free of Errors, Defections and Compliances,
 and discharging their Commission faithfully; or if any
 will come forth, and clear himself of these foremen-
 tioned Exceptions, or remove them by a declared Con-
 fession, and forsaking of their Offences, which have
 stumbled the godly in the Land; we will call them,
 hear them, own, countenance and embrace them, obey
 and submit ourselves to them in the Lord, and defend
 and maintain them to the uttermost of our Power. And
 we desire that this may be taken as a serious and solemn
 invitation from us, to all faithful Ministers, tender of
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their Master's Honour, and zealous for his Kingdom's Propagation, to come forth, and take part in the Day's Work and Testimony, and take Trial of our Earnestness herein.

In the *fifth* and last place, We shall propose some things by way of Caution, for the better understanding of the foresaid Grounds, which we look upon to be sufficient, in point of withdrawing, as is said.

I. We do not look upon all these Ministers that we withdraw from, upon more or fewer of the foresaid Grounds, to be no Ministers, yea, or no more Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, or that their pastoral Acts are invalidate or null; but only that we cannot lawfully embrace them as our Ministers, and concur with them in the publick Work, as they are now circumstantiated.

II. We do not look upon all these Ministers that we withdraw from, to be equally guilty of Desections or offensive Courses; howbeit we have not only one, but more of the foresaid Grounds, for withdrawing from the most Part that we refuse to concur with, though any one of them, if rightly considered and applied, do carry a Sufficiency, in point of withdrawing in the Circumstances.

III. We have not fixed such a stated withdrawing from all the Ministers forementioned, upon the foresaid Grounds, as that we will never concur with them any more, even though they should confess and forsake their offensive Courses, and give due Satisfaction to the Consciences of the offended; but only a conditional withdrawing, that is, *as we chuse to stand still in this Case and refuse to concur, until offensive and backsliding Courses be turned from*, according as it is prescribed to *Jeremy* chap. xv. 19. So whenever the Causes of Distance shall be rightly removed, Offences and Desections acknowledged and forsaken, we shall with all Readiness concur: yea, *we would account it a Day of our Joy and Hope in Israel*, if the Lord would give us Occasion to evidence the same. Wherefore, we reckon it not so much the giving the Offence, as defending of and continuing in it that doth warrant our withdrawing.

IV. We acknowledge, as Ministers have been uncer-

der of People, and have not done that which their Office called them unto, in pitying the ignorant, and taking pains upon them, by preaching, rebuking, exhorting and admonishing, but rather have condemned and misrepresented People, in their faithful and zealous Endeavours, before trying what they were owning and aiming at; so People have not been innocent and blameless, and free of Untenderness towards Ministers, in being rather embittered against their Persons, when they turned aside to Defections, than mourning over their Faults.

V. As we judge it the Height of Arrogancy, and Encroachment upon the sacred Office, for People to judge Ministers, or prescribe Rules unto them; so we look upon it as competent, and granted unto People by the Lord, to have a Judgment of their own Duty, how to carry towards Ministers, and not to take Matters upon Trust from them, but to prove all things before they refuse, and to hold fast what they find agreeable to the Law and to the Testimony, searching the Scriptures whether these things be so or not, for which the noble Bereans are commended. And it is given in Command, *John, iv. 1. Not to believe every Spirit, but try them whether they are of God;* which is not written only to Church-guides, though Church-guides are to try after their own Way judicially, and People in a private Way competent unto them: We look upon this as a Privilege, which the People (if they would not prostitute their true Christian Liberty) are bound to defend: and that not only extended to Ministers Doctrine, but also to their Practices and Professions (to know with some Satisfaction to the Conscience, what they have been) which through this vast Tract of Defection have been so different, while they have not clearly sided themselves, in making a Difference between the precious and the vile, nor given People distinctly to understand what they are aiming at, and where they resolve to stand.

H E A D V.

Concerning our delegating and commissionating some to represent our Cause to foreign reformed Churches; and our sending some young Men to the Study of Theology in the Netherlands.

THIS Head hath two Parts to be considered. As to the First, We are branded with that heinous Arrogation, of taking the Power of Church-government into our Hands (which we have abundantly refuted already) and are said to have sent *Delegation* in that Capacity to the Churches of *Holland, Helvetia* and *Geneva*. Therefore, to wipe away this Calumny, we offer these things following to Consideration.

I. Our Design in these Delegations was, to declare our Adherence to all the sworn and received Principles of the Church of *Scotland*, our Wrestlings against the Current of the Time's Defections, and our Detestation of the Blasphemies, Execrations, Errors and Extravagancies of *John Gib*, wherewith we had been most foully and unjustly branded; and also to represent unto foreign reformed Churches, our sad, broken and low Case to the end they might commiserate and help us, by their Prayers and otherwise: and that we might also know in what State Affairs are amongst them, which things might conduce both to their and our Advantage, putting them and us, according to our Places and Power, to endeavour the strengthening of ourselves, and of the Interest of Christ, against the Plots, Underminings, and Cruelties of the Adversary.

II. We profess and declare, that it was for no bad Design, whether to carry on a Schism, or to discover the Nakedness of our Mother; but to give them to understand, to what a low, lamentable, and broken State the sometimes famous Church of *Scotland* was now reduced, being made, by the Violence of prevailing Enemies, a ruinous Heap, and that yet there was a Remnant of her Children, taking pleasure in the Stones and Dust of her Rubbish; to the end, that when we could

et few at Home, we might provoke some abroad to sympathize with us.

III. We did not send such a Delegation, or give such Commission, as a thing determined by, or issuing from ministerial or magistratical Authority, nor yet as from the whole Church of *Scotland*, of which more fully see in the Explication of our Mind, concerning the title of the *Protestation against the Scottish Congregation at Rotterdam*, Head 6. But,

IV. As a poor, oppressed and distressed Remnant of this Church, imbodyed together in a general Correspondence, and endeavouring to stand by the Principles of this true Presbyterian Church, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government, and as a poor wasted Handful, whom God hath hitherto preserved in the midst of the Fires from utter Consumption: wherefore, we are the more bound to profess and confess his Name, notwithstanding all Opposition.

But further, understanding that we are excepted against, because of a Letter directed to the Churches of *Helvetia* and *Geneva*, giving a short Account of our deplorable Case, particularly, because of some Words in that foregoing Epistle, which are as follow: ——— But the Ingrement which is most bitter in our Cup is this, we are as sheep scattered without a Shepherd, having no Ministers at this present Time, to flourish the Gospel's Banner among (saving one) the rest of our Ministers, who continued faithful, are taken away by the violent Hand of the Adversaries: and others of them having laid aside their Work, becoming cruel, like the Ostriches of the Wilderness. To obviate and remove Exceptions against us from these Words, we offer these things to be considered.

I. The Case of Affairs amongst us, at the writing of that Letter, is to be remembered. For, as it appears by our Words, we spoke only of that Time then present: and certain it is (as ourselves and many others know) that then there was no Minister (save one) concurring with us in our stated Testimony, and publicly preaching the Gospel amongst us.

II. In that Letter we spoke only of ourselves, imbodyed together in particular and general Correspondencies,

as may appear from the fore-rehearsed Words, compared with the Tenor of the whole: and so concerning ourselves, the same might very well be affirmed.

III. As to the Comparison used, whereby it is said, *Others are become cruel like the Ostriches in the Wilderness*, we desire, that the Design and Scope of the Comparison be adverted unto, which, as it is obvious from the Comparison, was to hold forth this: *That as these cruel Creatures do not kythe natural Affection to that which is, their own; so our Ministers in that Time did not teach and preach God's Word unto us, but did then leave us in the midst of Snarcs, void of Counsel and Assistance, which gave us the Occasion, with Grief and Lamentation, to speak so concerning them, while we were seeking Help in our low Case.*

Moreover, on this Occasion, though it may seem posterior for Order, and that we should have cleared the Case before in the foregoing Head; yet, because mention is made in that Letter, of one only flourishing the Gospel's Banner amongst us, we shall here exonerate ourselves from another Reproach. We are branded with that ignominious Calumny, that we are of the mind to call and hear no Ministers, but that the foresaid one only: to wipe off such a heavy Imputation, we profess and declare,

I. That as we look upon the thing to be ignorant, factious and destitute; so we never declared nor did plead a Principle, to restrict our calling and hearing of Ministers to that one only; but, as we said above, are willing and longing, to receive and embrace all faithful Ministers, free of the gross Defections of the Time, that will come cleanly off from them, as is abundantly evinced by our present Practice, in calling and hearing of such, beside the foresaid one, though we do refuse to call and hear others in this broken Time, against whom we have just Exceptions, until Differences be removed in the mean while acting abstractly, not as a new erected Church, but as a poor broken Remnant of the old true Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

II. Though we be falsely accused of separating from others, because they own it as their Duty to hear and call faithful Ministers; yet we declare that we own

as our Duty, to call and hear Ministers, with such Qualifications as they themselves speak of, viz. *Who have owned, do own, and adhere unto the true received Principles of the Church of Scotland, founded upon the written Word of God, and whatsoever Declarations or Testimonies, former or latter, particular or more general, are agreeable thereunto.* And we profess, that we own it as our Duty, to call and hear all Ministers, against whom we have not just, solid and valid Exceptions. Yea,

III. We profess and declare, that we will call and hear such Ministers, as now we have just Exceptions against, whensoever the right Removal thereof shall satisfy our Consciences, by their condemning their Defections, testifying before God and the World their Resentment of the same, and taking up the right State of the Quarrel. Yet we must still stick at this, that we will not call or hear any Ministers, against whom we have just, solid and valid Exceptions, until the same be rightly removed in manner fore said.

As to the *second Part*, viz. the sending some young Men to the Study of Theology, and to receive Ordination in the *Netherlands*; we shall, 1. shew some things that concurred as Motives, Causes and Occasions thereof. And, 2. insert something about the Ordination of one of them.

As to the *First*, we shall mention these following, which concurred among others, as moving Causes of that Resolution

I. At that Time, being left alone, and these of the Ministers with whom we did most agree being various Ways removed from us, and seeing so many opposed our Testimony, which we thought our selves very insufficient to maintain or promote; therefore that we might have some more capacitated to do it, and that we might be preserved from Errors, We judged it expedient, to send some young Men abroad to these Colleges, that they might be soundly principled in the Christian Faith, seeing our Colleges were sadly corrupted.

II. At that Time, (yea more and more since) a great Part of our Church was either gone aside to Defection,

in Compliance with the Enemy, or else was pleading for Favourableness towards Union with the Men of these Defections, in their Defections and Compliances; therefore we desired to furnish our selves with some Means, to make Opposition to these Courses. For at that time, after the Death of Mr. *Richard Cameron*, and Mr. *Donald Cargil*, the Testimony by publick and frequent preaching of the Gospel did fall (though, 'tis true, the only wise God did then keep up this Testimony by other Means, to wit, Banishments, Martyrdoms upon Scaffolds, &c. Yea, in a special manner Martyrs then were so signally countenanced of the Lord, that safely it may be said, the then shed Blood of the Martyrs hath become a Seed unto the Church; for, as by hearing and seeing them some were reclaimed from their evil Ways, so many others were daily more and more confirmed in the Ways of the Lord, and Ministers became generally silent: So that (whatever might have been done privately in some secret Chamber, and some other retired places, yet) as for the Body of the Land, little Remedy by faithful Warning was prepared: therefore we thought it our Duty not to be wanting for our parts, and this was the most ready Expedient we could fall upon.

III. Because there was so great Opposition made unto some of the Witnesses of Christ, who had more faithfully witnessed against the Defections of the Time, we could not suffer them altogether to be buried, which, in all appearance, was then designed: For it cannot altogether be unknown, how they had designed to bury our fore-mentioned Testimony in our Declarations, which was evident from their so much opposing the same.

IV. In Opposition to which Design, resolving to maintain these Testimonies, we could not but conclude, that none conscientiously adhering to these Testimonies given against the Tyranny and Apostasy of our Time, could expect either Licence or Ordination from them; neither could it be safely sought in such Circumstances, upon the account of such imposed Restrictions which some before had been troubled with, even when Matters in controversy were not come to such height.

V. Because in several *Presbyteries*, some faithful Wit-
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nesses had been sharply rebuked, for their Faithfulness, and contending freely and publickly against some Sins and Corruptions of the Time ; but very rarely *have they been in Presbyteries rebuked and censured*, in these latter Times, for their *Unfaithfulness* : Therefore, after so many Discoveries of much *Unfaithfulness* in our Presbyteries at home, we were much discouraged in our Expectations of Help from them, and thought it safer to send abroad to take Trial of other Churches.

VI. We knew assuredly, that the Reformed Churches of Christ abroad, had a Power to licence and ordain Ministers, either to the Church Universal, or in particular Cases to particular Churches, upon the Request of a People, *cumulatively*, not *privatively*, that is, *for to help and confirm these Churches in their own Power* ; but not to deprive them of their Rights, or to usurp Authority over them ; not as an Act of Authority over, but as an Act of Charity to them. Finally, As was said above, hereby we designed neither to bring up *an evil Report upon the Church of Scotland*, neither to carry on a Faction nor Schism in it ; but upon the contrary, to declare our standing to the Reformation attained unto in this Land, and to satisfy our own Consciences.

More particularly in the second Place, *As to the Ordination of one of these young Men*, it is to be considered,

I. When he went Abroad, he was not in Capacity for being Ordained, nor any way accomplished for offering himself to previous Trials.

II. There was then no Hope of Ordination here in Scotland, to any who agreed with us in all the parts of our Testimony, neither could it be safely sought after, upon the foresaid Consideration.

III. Though the *Classis of Groningen*, by whom he was ordained, differ from the Reformation of Scotland, in her best Times, in some Things ; yet considering, (1) *That in these Differences they were never reformed*, and so cannot be charged therein with Defection. (2) *That they agree with the true Presbyterial Church of Scotland*, in all Principles against Popery, Prelacy, *Erastianism*, and all Heretical and Sectarian Errors. (3) *That they did then ob-*
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ject nothing against our present Testimony. (4) That they come under a General, and far other Consideration, being of a foreign Church, than Ministers of the same Original Church, and under the same Bond of Covenant with ourselves; for which Cause, joining with them in that Act of Ordination, came under another Consideration, (5) That in the Act of Ordination, they did obtrude none of these Differences, but did take him engaged to teach according to the Word of God, and the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, and the Discipline thereof. Upon all which Considerations, it was thought lawful to accept of Ordination from the foresaid Classis; especially seeing these Differences were openly before them, and plainly and particularly protested against, which was sufficient in such Circumstances.

IV. As the foresaid Classis did not hereby assume any Authority to the Detriment of the Church of Scotland; so the Church of Scotland did never monopolize to herself the sole Power of Ordination, of all that would officiate in her Service, in a broken State of the Church; neither did reject or invalidate the Ordination of any Sister Church, lending her helping Hand in the case of her Necessity.

V. The foresaid Classis is to be considered, as contradistinguished from the impure Cocceian Party in these Lands, there being none such concurring in the foresaid Ordination: Yea, Ordination by the University was refused, because of a Cocceian Professor there, who was to examine previously to the Ordination. And so a Testimony was given against the Toleration of that impure Party in these Lands. However, their Errors were both preached against, and otherwise witnessed against, by Ministers in that Place.

H E A D VI.

Concerning the Protestation given against the Scottish Congregation at Rotterdam.

BEcause we are much opposed, and cried out against, upon the Account of the Protestation given in against

gainst the Scots Congregation at Rotterdam; therefore, that our Minds may be plainly understood as to that, we offer the following Particulars to Consideration.

I. The chief Occasion of entering that Protestation was Mr. W. B. his writing to Mr. H. *That they at Rotterdam, together with Mr. G. B. Mr. T. H. younger, Mr. R. L. and others, did take it in evil part that any of our young Men were studying at Groningen; and did accuse our Societies of false and grievous Things: As, That we had disowned the King and all ruling under him; (which we own as our Duty, as is expressed before, but we deny what followeth) and had chosen all kinds of Magistrates amongst ourselves, as Chancellors, Lords, Presidents, and other Orders; and were for killing all as Enemies; who would not own our Government fabricated amongst us; That our Societies were not pure in Religion; and as they were a Faction, &c.* Whereupon, finding ourselves and the Cause much wronged by their Calumnies, to vindicate ourselves, and invalidate their Charge, we resolved upon this Protestation against that Congregation, for such Things as we could truly make out.

II. We acknowledge, that the Persons who enter'd that Protestation, ought to have given previous Admonition to the persons Protested against; and, by their failing in this, something of the due method of going about such an Action was omitted. But though we are not to Justifie the Failings that are in our Actions by the failings of others, yet the Authors of the foresaid accusations did cast us a bad Copy, in giving out such things against us without prerequisite Admonition.

III. As to the Title of the foresaid Protestation, *to wit, True Presbyterian Church of Scotland*, (which is also to be found in some other Papers) we do confess it unsuitable to express it so comprehensively; but thereby we do nowise understand, That unto the Societies, in any Sense, belongs the Title of the Church Ministerial, for this belongs alone to Church Guides; nor do we understand, that it should in any other Sense be ascribed to our Societies, as if they only were to be reckoned Believers, (for that is as large as Conversion or Effectual Calling) or as if they only were to be reckoned Sufferers for Christ,

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Christ, or that he hath no other Martyrs but from amongst them; nor, in a Word, do we reckon them the only Members of the Visible Church of Christ in Scotland: But we would have them to be looked upon, *as a poor distressed and contending Remnant, of the suffering and witnessing, Anti-Popish, Anti-Prelatick, Anti-Eraastian, Anti-Sectarian, True Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland, which hath been labouring to cleave close to the Parts and Degrees of our attained Reformation, and cordially concurring in their Places and Stations with such of the Ministers and Professors, as have gone before them, and with them, more resolutely and faithfully witnessing both against Tyranny and Apostasy.*

IV. We desire that the Charges in the second Article, wherein some Ministers Names are expressed, be understood separately and distributively, not collectively and copulatively; every one of these Ministers not being guilty in his own Person of all and every one of these Charges. But as we acknowledge, That as it was an Oversight to express these Charges so indefinitely, and to cast them and the Names of the Persons all in a Heap together, without making particular Application; so we are not convicted of any Falshood in these, as we desire them to be understood. For there is nothing there said that is not applicable to some of the Persons named; yea, we may safely say, that the foresaid Information against us, spoken of in Mr. W. B. his Letter, mentioning some Ministers Names, did give Occasion of inserting of Names in this Protestation, especially of these Ministers who were given up in the said Letter, as the principal Authors of the foresaid Information.

V. We do not mean by the Word *Treacherously* in the second Article, a Design to betray; neither does the Word itself always import so much, but only a practical betraying of Trust, whether it be designed or not. Nor do we mean, that the Epithets given to the associating Parties, viz. *Godless, &c.* are applied to all and every one of that Company (for we do not doubt of the Godliness of many of them) but only to some of them: nor yet these Words in the Conclusion, concerning the foresaid Congregation, viz. *That no Pendicle of Christ's Crown*
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was asserted by them, are so extensively and universally understood by us, as that no Pendicle at all of Christ's Crown was asserted by them, but only that our Controversies with some of the complying Party of our Church, concerning Christ's Prerogatives as King, and what belongs to his Crown, was not asserted by them, we mean the necessary Testimony against the Supremacy, Tyranny, and Compliances with the same. However, we profess, as we are not to justify any Expression whatsoever in that foresaid Protestation, which is too extensively proposed; or favours of real Bitterness, so we are not to condemn the Scope thereof, albeit we acknowledge several unsuitable Expressions in it.

VI. Considering that the Causes inserted, materially considered, and rightly applyed, are both true and sufficient for a Protestation: We desire that it may be looked upon as a standing Testimony (together with what contentings have formerly been by some faithful *Scottish* Sufferers in that Land) for the Vindication of Truth, and against the sad wrongs and abuses in that Congregation, ay and while the Causes inserted are maintained, and the offence and scandal given not removed. Yea, in very deed, a deep sense in the mean time of the sins witnessed against by the foresaid Protestation, would make all therein involved more favourably, and charitably to construct of the Action.

H E A D. VII.

Concerning the Charge of making Canons, in which are Expressed the Qualifications of the Members of General Meetings and Societies, and trying of Scandalous Persons.

THe Societies being likewise misrepresented, in that they are said to make *Canons*, expressing qualifications of the Members of their Meetings particular and more general, and accordingly take to themselves the Trial of *Scandalous Persons*: Therefore, to shew the Groundlessness

essess of such an Impuration, we shall speak a little both to the one and to the other.

First, As to the alledged making of *Canons*, the Alledgance is founded upon a Question usually proponed to the Members of our General Meetings, which is this, *Are you free of joining with the unfaithful silent and complying Ministers of the Time?* Which being so much displeasing to many, and much carped at, and also the occasion of the foresaid charge being taken from: We shall therefore propone some things concerning the charge in General, imputing to us the making of these so called *Canons*, and imposing such Qualifications on the Members of our meetings, and then touching the forementioned *Interrogation* in particular.

First, We think it an odious Calumny invidiously cast upon us by our Traducers, that we have taken upon us to make *Canons*: Neither do we understand what they mean by making *Canons*: For (1) If by *Canons* be understood such constitutions or acts, as flow from *Politick* or *Ecclesiastick* Authority, that the *Societies* did or do assume to themselves, the making of such, *we altogether deny*. (2) If they understand by them *Impositions* or *sinful Restrictions*, *these we also deny and disown*. (3) If they understand them to be *General* and *absolute Rules*, laid down by us for all times, and cases of the Church, or for Church fellowship, and *Communion of Saints* in all its Degrees, *these we also deny to be among us*: But if they mean some *Interrogations* for discovering the Persons, we may concur with in our *General Meetings*, *these we own and acknowledge*: But these are very *Impertinently* called *Canons*; neither did we ever call them by such a Name, nor look upon them as such a thing.

Secondly, Whereas they say, we make *Canons* expressing Qualifications of the Members of our Meetings: The Truth is, we would have them so Qualified as we may with comfort and confidence join with them in our selected Fellowships, being of one accord, of one mind in the matter of our Testimony, but hereby we make no rules prescribing Qualifications of Church Members, in other kinds and degrees of Church Communion. And

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that this may be better understood, we shall here briefly and plainly exprefs our minds.

We deny not the Communion of Saints to and with others in many other degrees, whether they be Natives or Foreigners, under diverse considerations : For we distinguish betwixt a joining, which we may call Catholick or Universal among Christians, considered as such, and an Ecclesiastical joining among Members of one particular Organical Church, considered as Members of that Church : As for the first, we subdivide it also into its degrees ; for we may join with some as Christians, holding the same Fundamentals, Eph. iv. 3. 6. Acts ii. 5, 9. comprehending all that are sound in Religion, excluding all Hereticks : We may join with others considered more strictly, and upon stricter Conditions, as Protestants, providing they hold nothing contrary to any of the Reformed Churches Testimonies, but especially if they be Faithful in their own particular Testimony, though the Word of theirs be not the same with ours ; We may join with others upon yet stricter Conditions as our Covenanted Brethren, such as the Members of the Churches of England and Ireland joined together with us in the same League and Covenant, providing they own it, and prosecute the ends of it, and maintain the word of their Testimony, according to it, and their attained Reformation, albeit they have not the same word of Testimony every way with us : As for the Second, We own a Communion upon stricter conditions and with stricter Qualifications, amongst the Members of one Church and formed Society, under Subjection to the same Reformed Doctrine, Worship and Government, as for Instance, this Covenanted Church of Scotland ; Which Ecclesiastical Communion (particularly in reference to our own Church) is to be considered diverse ways, and accordingly is capable of diverse degrees ; for either the Church must be considered as Constitute in good Order, having Judicatories for redressing abuses, in which Case we think it were an Usurpation, for private Societies to assume the Regulation either of joining or separating, without recourse to the Judicatories. Or it must be considered as ascending, a growing up gradually unto Reformation, in which case many things also may be born with, especially by persons in a private capacity, and not made a matter of separation;

tion; because never reformed. Or lastly, (which comes more home to our case) it may be considered as declining and falling back from some degrees of Reformation attained unto, and as it is broken down by complaint and *Habitual Tyranny* and *Epidemical Apostasy*; in which case our *strictest degrees of Communion*, in *selected Fellowships*, at least, must be qualified with strictest conditions, considering the present State of Affairs in this broken state of the Church: For in these we must necessarily endeavour after Oneness and Agreement as to the word of our Testimony, among the Constituent Members of these Societies, with whom we concur in a joint carrying on the publick work. For we desire not to forget how the quarrel of our Zealous and Ancient Covenanters was itated, against *Papists*, *Malignants and Sectaries*, *Defection* and *Schism*; And against sinful Union as one extreame, and sinful Separation as another; and all that join with us in our selected Communion, we would have concerning the same quarrel.

Thirdly, more particularly, as Concerning that Question, called by them *Canon*, which among others is proposed to the Members of our General Meetings, concerning their joining or not joining with the silent, unfaithful, and complying Ministers of the time, we shall add these few things. 1. The occasion of the proposing this Interrogation amongst us was and is, because since our Persecution began to increase, Ministers generally had fallen into such sad and lamentable defections, as is shewed above: Therefore we would inform ourselves, by that Question to the members of our Meetings, whether they had their countenance as formerly, or not. However, 2. By that Question, we understand no Ministers, but these only to whom all (or at least some) of the foresaid adjective Epithets are applicable; that is, either these who had complied with the Enemy, or were become silent in lying by from the publick work, or not discovering the palpable sins of the time, or were in such a measure unfaithful, as would be decerned censurable by our Church constitutions.

Secondly, As to the other thing objected against our Societies, to wit, the *taking to ourselves the Trial of Scandalous*

scandalous persons: We profess and declare, that all the Trial of Scandals or scandalous persons which we Judge Lawful, expedient, and competent to private persons, notwithstanding of the greatest necessity, is merely popular and private, for information about the ease or practice of the persons, in order to the regulating our Consciences in our duty and carriage towards them, that so, according to the Judgment of discretion, we may be fully perswaded in our minds, as to what is right or wrong, false or true, and may not remain staggering or doubting in our duty and deportment towards them; not Judicial and Authoritative: For we by no means Judge it lawful to commit unto the people the power of Discipline, no more than it is lawful for them to preach and administrate the Sacraments. Yea, so far are we from that *Sectarian Principle*, that under no consideration whatsoever, we Judge it warrantable to assert, that radically and originally the power of Church Government is seated in the people, and from them derived unto the Pastors and Elders, as it is in Civil Government, which cometh from God the supream Lord and King of all the world, and is radically seated in the people, and from them derived unto and conferred upon their Magistrates and Civil Governours, whereas ecclesiastick Government cometh from Christ the Mediator, and King of his Church, and by him immediately conferred upon the Rulers and Officers of his House, with whom he hath promised his presence unto the end of the world.

BUT to conclude, we desire a few things of our Brethren, unto whose hands this shall come. 1. That none may look upon us, from what we have professed and declared in this our Vindication, as having new sentiments about these Heads. For we did never hold or maintain Opinions, as to these particulars, contrar to what we have here expressed; so that this is not a change, but an explication of our minds: And if any well meaning person and zealously inclined amongst us, hath, through ignorance or mistake, uttered themselves otherways than we have here explicated;

ed, we are not to maintain the same. 2. We desire that no advantage may be taken against us, from words or expressions in this paper through our weakness, but that the scope and design of the whole may be weighed and considered; and so that one part of it may not be divided from another, but that all the parts of it may be together considered, and impartially pondered without affectation or prejudice. 3. Seeing the Cause of God hath suffered great hurt, by persons their too much credulity in believing ill and false reports, and spreading the same as real certainties, without ever trying or searching into the Truth or Falshood thereof: And seeing that thereby our Divisions and Distractions have been greatly multiplied, therefore we desire (which we are also willing to grant unto others) that none hereafter may give ear and credit to bear reports of our Accusers and Traducers, without due trying and searching into the truth thereof (at least if not for our sakes, yet that they would forbear for the Gospel's) seeing that from henceforth they may be convinced of our being so much wronged by such sad misrepresentations. 4. We desire that in time coming, any who shall hear or suppose such opinions or Practices, as are unsound and hurtful to be maintained and followed by us, may deal so Friendly and Christianly with us, as to admonish us thereof, in order to convince and convict us of the same, before they publicly vent such things, or inform against us. That nothing in this Paper, which may seem more freely expressed, may be constructed as flowing from prejudice at any Person or Persons whatsoever, or from a glorying in our Mother's Nakedness, which is also our own, or from an Humour to debate; For we desire herein, singly and simply to have a Respect to the Glory of God, the Vindication of his Truths, and (if the Lord will) the Advantage both of the Givers and Receivers of Malignant reports against us. *In the mean time we commit the Cause unto the Lord, and desire to wait until he shall arise and give Testimony for his Truths.* For, as we are firmly persuaded in our Consciences before God, that this is his Cause, and the Covenanted Reformation, which we are owning and suffering for; so we are hopeful that he

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shall, in his own appointed Time, make himself known unto the World, owning the same, how low soever it be now : And that as he hath been pleased, even in these Times of hot and heavy Persecution of cruel and crafty Enemies, and of sinful and shameful Defection of the Generality of Ministers and Professors, to raise up and signally to spirit not a few honoured Worthies, (tho' mean, weak and contemptible in the Eyes of the World) valiantly to contend, faithfully to witness, and patiently to suffer for the same Cause, even to resisting unto Blood, in their stedfast adhering unto their sworn Duties and Principles, (wrestling as Men and as Christians, as well for their Natural and Civil Rights and Liberties against Usurpation and Tyranny, as for their *Covenanted Religion* against Popery, Prelacy, and *sacrilegious Supremacy* ; and also against the *Apostasy*, *Compliance*, and detestable Neutrality of others) which Worthies following the Footsteps of the faithful Cloud of Witnesses that have gone before them, have pourtrayed a noble and renowned Example of Virtue, Faithfulness and Courage to the present Age, and have sealed and transmitted an honest and honourable Testimony to Posterity ; so we hope the same Testimony shall be continued to the Reformation, amongst Men of our Principles and Profession, at length until he shall make the Blood, which hath been shed sealing the same, appear above Ground to be the Seed of the Church, and cause his People to reap the Fruit of this present fiery Furnace, according to his Word, *promising, That all Things shall work together for good to them that love him, and wait for him.* Finally, We add no more, but desire, that this may be taken as the unbofoming of the genuine Thoughts, and exhibiting the Minds and Sentiments (as to the Controversies of this present Time) of a poor wasted, wounded, afflicted, bleeding, misrepresented and reproached Remnant, and Handful of suffering People, who desire to throw down whar God will throw down, and to build what he will establish, when he comes. *To whom be the Kingdom and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Because the Reader may desiderate these Declarations, so fervently exclaimed against, and so here frequently mentioned, and may impute it to Disingenuity, to conceal these Things that are every where bespattered; and may reckon he is imposed upon, in having the Faults of things both aggravated and extenuated, and yet cannot see the things themselves: Therefore, to the End that both the Reader may be satisfied, and the Owners of these Declarations may be cleared of any Prevarication in the Case, and that also more Abuses of Transcribers may be prevented, Care hath been taken to get the most correct Copies that could be found at the publishing hereof, and to subjoin the same in the following Pages. Giving the Expressions most excepted against in different Characters.

The TESTIMONY published at Rutherglen, May 29, 1679.

AS the Lord hath been pleased still to keep and preserve his Interest in this Land, by the Testimonies of some faithful Witnesses from the Beginning; so in our Day, some have not been wanting, who, through greatest Hazards, have added their Testimonies to these who have gone before them, by suffering Death, Banishment, Torturings, Forfeitures, Imprisonments, and what not, from a perfidious and cruel Adversary to the Church and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Land: Therefore we owning the same Interest of Christ, according to the Word of the Lord, and the *National and Solemn League and Covenant*, desire to add our Testimony to the Testimonies of the Worthies that have gone before us, (though we be unworthy, yet hoping as true Members of the Church of Christ in Scotland) and that against all Things done prejudicial to this Interest, from the Beginning of the Work of Reformation, especially from the Year 1648, to 1660. and more particularly from the said Year 1660, and downwards, against the Acts following. As, against the Act of Supremacy; the

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the *Declaration*, whereby our Covenants were condemn'd; the *Act* for Eversion of the established Government of the Church, and for establishing of abjured *Prelacy*; the *Act Rescissory* of all *Acts* of Parliament and Assemblies, for establishing the Government of the Church, according to the Word; the *Act of Glasgow*, putting the same in Execution, whereby at one Time were violently cast out above Three hundred Ministers, without any legal Procedure; likewise the *Act* for appointing an holy *Anniversary Day*, to be kept every Twenty ninth of May, for giving Thanks for the setting up an usurped Power, destroying the Interest of Christ in the Land; whereby the Creature is set up to be worshipped in the Room of our Great Redeemer, and a Power is assumed which is proper to the Lord only, for the appointing of Ordinances in his Church, as particularly the Government thereof, and the keeping of holy Days, belongeth to no Prince, Prelate, nor Person on Earth, but only to our Lord Redeemer. And further, we give our Testimony against all sinful and unlawful *Acts*, emitted and executed, published and prosecuted by them, against our Covenanted Reformation. And for Confirmation of this our Testimony, we do here this Day, being the Twenty ninth of May 1679, publickly and most justly burn the foresaid *Acts* at this Cross of *Rutherglen*, being the chief Burgh of the Nether-Ward of *Clidesdale*; as they perfidiously and blasphemously have burnt our holy Covenants, through several Cities of these Covenanted Kingdoms. We hope none will take Exceptions at our not subscribing this our Testimony, being so solemnly given: for we are ready to do it, if necessary, and to enlarge it with all our faithful suffering Brethren in the Land.

The Declaration and Testimony of the true Presbyterian, Anti-Prelatick, Anti-Erastian, persecuted Party in Scotland, published at Sanquhar, June 22. 1680.

IT is not amongst the smallest of the Lord's Mercies to this poor Land, that there hath always been some, who

who have given their Testimony against every Course of Defection we were guilty of; which is a Token for Good, that he doth not intend to cast us off altogether; but that he will leave a Remnant in whom he will be gracious, if they, through his Grace, keep themselves clean, and walk in his Ways and Methods, as they have been walked in and owned by Predecessors of truly worthy Memory, in their carrying on of our Noble Work of Reformation, in the several Steps thereof, both from Popery and Prelacy, and likewise from Erastian Supremacy, so much usurped by him, who, it is true, (so far as we know) is descended from the Race of our Kings; yet he hath so far deboarded from what he ought to have been, by his Perjury, and usurping in Church Matters, and Tyranny in Matters Civil, as is known by the whole Land; that we have just Reason to account it amongst the Lord's great Controversies against us, that we have not disowned him, and the Men of his Practices, whether inferior Magistrates, or any other, as Enemies to our Lord Jesus his Crown, and the true Protestant and Presbyterian Interest in these Lands, our Lord's espoused Bride and Church. Therefore, although we be for Government and Governors, such as the Word of God, and our Covenants allows; yet we for ourselves, and all that will adhere to us, *the Representatives of the true Presbyterian Church, and Covenanted Nation of Scotland*, considering the great Hazard of lying under Sin any longer, Do, by this presents, disown *Charles Stuart*, who hath been reigning these Years bygone (or rather we may say Tyrannizing) on the Throne of *Britain*, as having any Right, Title, or Interest to, or in the said Crown of *Scotland*, or Government; as forfeited several Years since, by his Perjury, and Breach of Covenant with God and his Church, and Usurpation of his Crown and Royal Prerogative, and many other Breaches in Matter Ecclesiastick, and by his Tyranny and Breaches in the very *Rules of Government*, in Matters Civil. For which Reasons, we declare, That several Years since he should have been denuded of being King, Ruler, or Magistrate, or having any Power, or to be obeyed as such. As also, we, under the Banner of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Cap-
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rain of Salvation, do declare a War with such a Tyrant and Usurper, and all the Men of these Practices, as Enemies to our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Cause and Covenant. And against all such as have any way strengthened him, sided with, or acknowledged him, in his Usurpation Civil and Ecclesiastick: Tea, and against all such as shall any ways strengthen, side with, or acknowledge him, or any other in the like Usurpation and Tyranny; far more against such, as would betray or deliver up our free reformed Church into the Bondage of Antichrist, the Pope of Rome. By this we homologate our Testimony at Rutherglen, the 29th of May, 1679, and all the faithful Testimonies of these that have gone before us, as also of these who have suffered of late. Also, we do disclaim that Declaration published at Hamilton, the 13th Day of June, 1679. chiefly, because it takes in the King's Interest, which we are several Tears since loosed from; as also, because of the foresaid Reasons, and others, that we may after this (if the Lord will) publish. As also, we disown and resent the Reception of the Duke of York, a professed Papist, as repugnant to our Principles and Vows to the most High God, and as that which is the great, though (alas!) the just Reproach of our Church. We also, by this, protest against his succeeding to the Crown, as against whatever hath been done, or any are essaying to do, in this Land given to the Lord, in Prejudice to our Work of Reformation. And to conclude, we hope after this, none will blame us, or offend at our rewarding of these that are against us, as they have done to us, as the Lord gives the Opportunity. This is not to exclude any who hath declined, if they be willing to give Satisfaction, according to the Degree of Offence.

The Act and Apologetick Declaration of the true Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland, published at Lanerk, January 12. 1682.

ALthough we ought to take in good part, whatever God in his infinite Wisdom hath, for the Punishment of our Sins, carved out unto us, and eye and acknowledge him alone in it; and though we always ought

ought to acknowledge Government and Governors, as ordained by him, in so far as they rule and govern according to the Rules set down by him in his Word, and constitutive Laws of the Nation, and ought to cast the Mantle of Love on the lesser Errors of Governors, and give the best Countenance to their Administration, that the Nature of their Actions will bear: yet when all these Laws, both of God and the Kingdom, conditional and constitutive of the Government, are casted and annulled, by pretended Laws, and the highest of Usurpation, and an inexplicable Prerogative in Matters Ecclesiastick, and arbitrary Government in Matters Civil, is arrogate, when a Banner of Impiety, Prophaneness and Atheism is avowedly displayed against the Heavens; a Door opened to Abominations of all Sorts and Sizes, and the Remedy thereof still denied by him, who should be as a Sun and a Shield to the People; when the Parliaments, who ought to be the Grand Trustees of the Kingdom, to whom it belongs in such a Case to secure the Civil and Spiritual Interests, are so prelimited by Law, as that no true Son of the State or Church hath Liberty to sit and vote there; so that the Parliaments, and all Places of publick Trust, and Offices of the Kingdom, from the highest to the lowest, are made up of none but these who are corrupted, overawed, overruled and bribed: What shall the People do in such an Extremity? Should they give their Reason as Men, their Consciences as Christians, and resign their Liberties, Fortunes, Religion, and their All, to the inexorable Obstinacy, incurable Willfulness, and Malice of these, who, in spite of God and Man (and notwithstanding of their many Oaths and Vows both to God and his People) are resolved to make their own Will the absolute and sovereign Rule of their Actions, and their strained Indulgencies the Measure of the Subjects Hope and Happiness? Shall the End of Government be lost, through Weakness, Wickedness, and Tyranny of Governors? Must the People, by an implicate Submission, and deplorable Stupidity, destroy themselves, and betray their Posterity, and become Objects of Reproach to the present Generation, and Pity and Contempt to the future? Have they not, in such an

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Extremity, good Ground to make use of that natural and radical Power they have, to shake off that Yoke, which neither we nor our Fore-fathers were able to bear? Which accordingly the Lord honoured us (in a general and unpreluded Meeting of the Estates and Shires of Scotland) to do; *A Convention of unpreluded Members, a Convention of Men, who had only the Glory of God, and the Good of the Commonwealth before their Eyes*; the like whereof the present reigning Tyrant could never since his home-coming pretend to. At which *Convention*, he was most legally, and by general Consent cast off, by the Declaration afterward published at *Sanquhar*, by especial Warrant from the said *Convention*. But that we may not seem to have done that, or yet to do the like, upon no Grounds, or yet upon few and small Grounds, we shall hint at some of the many Thousands of the Misdemeanours of the now cast off Tyrant, in his overturning of our Church and State.

And, *First*, at his very Entry, as if he had attained to Nero's Desire, at one Blow, in his first Parliament, he cut off the Neck of that noble Constitution of Church and State, which our noble and worthy Ancestors had made; and not thinking it enough treacherously and falsely to perjure himself, he made such Constitutions and Laws (it it be not an Abuse of Language to call them so) as that none but Fools of his own Feather, and such as would run with himself to the same Excess of Riot, should have Access to the very meanest Place or Office in the Kingdom: and though that in itself is enough, yet not the thousand Part of what he hath done.

2. Did he not take to himself a licentious Privilege, the exalting of himself unto a Sphere exceeding all Measures Divine and Human, tyrannically obtruding his Will for a Law, both in Matters Civil and Ecclesiastick, making us a Laughing-stock to the neighbouring Nations, who imagined, that what he was doing (however tyrannous in itself) to be consonant to our Law, blaming the Badness of the Law, instead of the Badness of the Governors; whereas nothing could be less consonant to the Tenor and End of our, and all other Laws, Divine and Human. For we have Reason to praise the Lord, who eminently

eminently assisted our Ancestors in framing of our Laws; so that we may (upon good Ground) say, that there is no Nation in Civil Affairs hath better, and in Ecclesiastick Affairs so good Laws as we, having (by God's great Providence) attained unto a more excellent and strict Reformation, than any Nation. The observing of which Laws, was the very constitutive and absolute Condition, whereupon he was admitted to the Royal Office, and without which he was not to have the Exercise of his Power, and to which he was most solemnly and deeply sworn oftner than once, with his Hands lifted up to the most high God; *he himself declaring the Subjects Tie no longer to remain or continue, than the Ends and Constitutions of these Covenants were pursued and preserved by him.* All which are (contrary to his Engagements foresaid.) by his pretended (and as aforesaid constiture) Parliaments cassed and annulled, and the Laws no more made the Rule, but his own Will in his Letters: So that we are made the Reproach of the Nations, who say, we have only the Law of Letters, instead of the Letter of the Law.

3. Hath it not been his constant Method, to adjourn and dissolve Parliaments at his Pleasure, when they (tho' his own Creatures) were so sensible of his Misdemeanours, that they began to question; and when questioned by them, ye may easily conjecture what they were.

4. Hath he not seated himself as supreme Head over all Persons, in all Causes Civil and Ecclesiastick? And by virtue of that arrogantly arrogated Power, fabricate a chimerick Government, or rather Pageantry in the Church, with such ludicrous Eminencies, pompous Power and Pride, through the Vanity of Mens depraved Imaginations, the grievous and mysterious Abyss, from whence have issued all the Calamities, all the languishing Sorrows, and confounding Shames and Reproaches, which, in this Day of Blackness and Darkeness, have invaded, involved, polluted and pestered the Church and Kingdom. And thus hath he approven himself to be the *Defender of the Faith!* under which the godly Party, true Sons of the Church and Nation, have been groaning these twenty Years bygone, and in great Numbers murdered

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murdered and slain in the Fields, led as Lambs to the Slaughter upon Scaffolds, imprisoned, and kept in Irons, and with exquisite Tortures tormented, exiled, banished, and sold as Slaves amongst Savages: all which they endured most patiently a long Time, or ever they offered to appear in publick in Arms against him. And all this they have met with as a Reward (just upon the Lord's Part, though unjust and ungrate as to his Part) for their too great and inordinate Love, wherewith they prevented him in the Day of his Distress, being the first and only Beginning of his unhappy Restoration.

5. Time will fail us to narrate what exorbitant Taxings, Cessings, and every way impoverishing of the Subjects, and grinding of the Faces of the poor, dilapidating the Pendicles, Rights and Revenues of the Crown, for no other End, but to imploy them for keeping up a Brothel, rather than a Court, since there is no Court in the World hath attained unto such a Height of Debauchery and Depravedness, as that Court by his Example hath done. *For the whole World follows the Example of the Prince.*

6. And Lastly, As if it had not been enough to exerce such a tyrannical and arbitrary Power himself, he, by a late Parliament, such as the former, intends that his Cruelty and Tyranny should not die with himself, but that he shall in his time install such an one (if not worse) as himself, contrary to all Law, Reason, and Religion; and in that Parliament to unhinge very Protestantism itself; by framing a *Test*; such as no Protestant (how corrupt soever) can take: and so ridiculous, that it is made the Laughing-stock even of Enemies themselves.

Is it then any Wonder, considering such Dealings and many thousands more, that true *Scotsmen* (though we have been always, and even to Extremity sometimes loyal to our Kings) should, after twenty Years Tyranny, break out at last, as we have done, and put in Practice that Power, which God and Nature hath given us, and we have reserved to ourselves, as our Engagements with our Princes, having been always conditional, as other Kingdoms are implicitly, but ours explicitly?

Let none therefore object against the Legality of what we

we have done, or are doing: for we offer as (how inconsiderable we are said to be) to prove ourselves to have done nothing against our ancient Laws, Civil or Ecclesiastick, against any Lawyers or Divines whatsoever, our ancient Laws being Judges: and we having Safety to pass and repass (if the publick Faith after so many Breaches can be trusted) for that Effect. So then let no foreign Kingdoms or Churches through Misinformation or false Copies, as they are many) of what we act or do, because we have no Access to the Press as they, We say, let them not take up a wrong Opinion of us, or our Proceedings: for we are only endeavouring to extricate ourselves from under a tyrannous Yoke, and to reduce our Church and State to what they were in the Years 1648 and 1649.

We therefore, here convened, *in our Name and Authority*, ratify and approve what hath been done by the *Rutberglen* and *Sanquhar* Declarations; and do by this Presents *rescind, annul, and make void*, whatsoever hath been done by *Charles Stuart* or his Accomplices, in prejudice to our ancient Laws and Liberties, in all the several pretended and prelimited Parliaments and Conventions since the Year 1660; and particularly, the late Parliament holden at *Edinburgh* the 28th July 1681, by a Commissioner professedly Popish, and for Villany exiled his native Land, with all the Acts and Laws there statute and enacted; as that abominable, ridiculous, unparalleled, and Soul-perjuring *Test*, and the rest.*

We therefore *command and charge* you, to pass to the Market-Cross of *Lanerk*, and *in our Name and Authority*, publish this our Act and Declaration, as ye will be answerable. Given at the 15th December 1681.

Let King *Jesus* reign, and all his Enemies be scattered.

The Apologetick Declaration, and Admonitory Vindication, of the true Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland; Especially anent Intelligencers and Informers.

ALbeit we know, that the People of God in all ages have been cruelly persecuted and maliciously
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reviled, by Apostates from and enemies to the Truths of our Lord Jesus Christ; yet such hard usage and Virulent reproachings, hath not (at least ought not) to have abated the zeal of tender hearted Christians, in the Prosecution of Holy and Commanded Duties. Therefore as hitherto (through Grace assisting,) we have not been driven to lay aside necessary obliging Duties, because of the viperous threatnings of Men, who are given up of a Holy and wise God to lay out all their might and power for promoting a course of wicked Profanity, by Virulent persecution and ignominious Calumnies (to all of whom nevertheless that are reconcilable unto God, we heartily wish Eternal Salvation) for so we declare our firm Resolution of constant adherence to our Covenants and Engagements; whereby we are bound to have common Friends and Foes with our Covenanted Reformation, and to look upon what is done to one as done to all of us; and also our unanimous adherence to our faithful Declarations, wherein, we have disown'd the Authority of *Charles Steuart*, (not Authority of God's institution, either among Christians or Heathens) and all Authority depending upon him, for Reasons given elsewhere (disclaiming all such things as infer a Magistratical Relation betwixt him and us.) And wherein also we have declared War against him and his accomplices, such as lay out themselves to promote his wicked and hellish designs. Therefore, that therein our mind may be the more clearly understood, and for preventing further mistakes Anent our purposes, We do hereby jointly and unanimously Testify, and declare that as we utterly detest and abhor that hellish principle of killing all who differ in judgment or perswasion from us, it having no bottom upon the word of God or right Reason; so we look upon it as a Duty binding upon us, to publish openly unto the world, That, for as much as we are firmly and really purposed not to injure or offend any whomsoever, but to pursue the end of our Covenants, in standing to the Defence of our Glorious work of Reformation, and of our own lives; yet (we say) we do hereby declare unto all, that who-soever stretch forth their hands against us, while we are main-

maintaining the Cause and interest of Christ against his enemies, in the defence of our covenanted Reformation: By shedding our blood actually, either by Authoritative Commanding, such as bloody Counsellors (bloody, we say, insinuating clearly by this and the other Adjective Epithets, an open Distinction betwixt the cruel and blood thirsty, and the more sober and moderate) Especially that (so called) Justiciary, General of Forces, Adjutants, Captains, Lieutenants, and all in Civil, and Military power, who make it their work to embroe their hands in our blood, or by obeying such Commands, such as bloody Militia men, malicious Troopers, Soldiers, and Dragoons; likewise such Gentlemen and Commons, who through wickedness and Ill-will, ride and run with the foresaid persons to lay Search for us; or who deliver up any of us into their hands to the spilling of our blood; by inciting morally, or stirring up Enemies to the taking away of our Lives, such as designedly and purposedly advise, counsel, and encourage them to proceed against us to our utter Extirpation; by informing against us wickedly, wittingly, and willingly, such as viperous and malicious Bishops and Curates, and all such sort of Intelligencers; who lay out themselves to the Effusion of our Blood, together with all such, as in obedience to the Enemies their Commands, at the sight of us, raise the *Hue and Cry* after us; Yea, and against all such, as comparing before the Adversaries, their Courts upon their demand, delate us & any who befriend us, to their and our extream hazard and suffering: We say, all and every one of such shall be reputed by us Enemies to God and the Covenanted work of Reformation, and punished as such according to our power and the degree of their offence; chiefly if they shall continue after the publication of this our Declaration, obstinately and habitually, with malice to proceed against us, any of the foresaid ways; not at all excepting from present punishment, such as formerly have been chief ringleaders and obstinate offenders; and withal leaving room for Civil and Ecclesiastick satisfaction before Lawful and settled Judicatories, for the offence of such persons as our power at this time cannot reach; or the de-

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gree of their punishment according to their offences is hard for us to be determined. Finally, we do hereby declare that we abhorre, condemn, and discharge any personal attempts, upon any pretext whatsoever, without previous deliberation, common or competent consent, without certain probation by sufficient Witnesses, the guilty persons Confession, or the notourness of the deeds themselves. Inhibiting also and discharging any of our Emissaries whomsoever, to stretch forth their hands beyond the certainly known degrees of any of the foresaid persons their offences.

Now let not any think (our God assisting us) we will be so slack handed in time coming, to put matters in execution, as heretofore we have been, seeing we are bound faithfully and valiantly to maintain our Covenants and the Cause of Christ: Therefore let all these foresaid persons be admonished of their hazard. And particularly all ye Intelligencers, who by your voluntary Informations endeavour to render us up to the Enemies hands, that our blood may be shed, for by such courses ye both indanger your immortal Souls, if Repentance prevent not, seeing God will make Inquisition for shedding the precious blood of his Saints, whatever be the thoughts of men, and also your bodies, seeing ye render your selves actually and maliciously guilty of our blood, whose innocency the Lord knoweth: However, we are sorry at our very hearts, that any of you should chuse such courses, either with bloody *Doeg* to shed our blood, or with the flattering *Ziphites* to inform persecuters where we are to be found: So we say again, we desire you to take warning of the hazard that ye incur, by following such courses, for the sinless Necessity of Self preservation, accompanied with holy Zeal for Christ's Reigning in our Land, and suppressing of profanity, will move us not to let you pass unpunished. Call to your Remembrance, all that is in perill is not lost, and all that is delayed is not forgiven. Therefore, expect to be dealt with as ye deal with us, so far as our power can reach; not because we are acted by a sinful Spirit of Revenge for private and personal Injuries; but mainly because, by our fall,
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Reformation suffers Damage, yea, the Power of Godliness, through insuaring flatteries, and terrible threatening, will thereby be brought to a very low ebb, the consciences of many more dreadfully surrendered, and profanities more established and propagated.

And as upon the one hand we have here declared our purposes anent malicious injurers of us, so upon the other hand, we do hereby beseech and obtest all you who wish well to *Zion*, to shew your good will towards us, by acting with us, and in your Places and Stations according to your ability, counselling, encouraging and strengthening our hands, for this great work of holding up the Standard of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think not that in any ways you are called to ly by neutral and indifferent, especially in such a Day; for we are a People, by holy Covenants dedicated unto the Lord, in our Persons, Lives, Liberties, and Fortunes, for defending and promoting this glorious work of Reformation; notwithstanding all opposition that is or may be made thereunto, yea and sworn against all Neutrality and Indifferency in the Lord's matters: And moreover we are fully perswaded, That the Lord, who now hideth his face from the House of *Jacob*, will suddenly appear, and bring light out of darkness, and perfect strength out of weakness, and cause Judgment return again to Righteousness.

Thus having declared our deliberate, lawful and necessary purposes, concerning this matter, in order to the Publication of the same, we do hereby statute and ordain that upon the eight day of *November* Copies of this our Declaration be affixed upon a sufficient and competent Number of the Publick Market Crosses of the respective Burghs, and of the Patent Doors of the respective Kirks within this Kingdom. Given at

upon the 28th *October* 1684.

Let King Jesus Reign, and all his Enemies be scattered.

The Protestation, and Apologetick Declaration, of the Contending and Suffering Remnant, of the true Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland.

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Against the Proclaiming James Duke of York, King of Scotland, England, France, and Ireland: The lawfulness of the present Pretended Parliament, and the apparent In-let of Popery, &c. published at Sanquhar,

IT hath pleased the Holy and Wise God, to exercise the Church of Scotland, now of a long time, with wrestling and warfaring, under the yoke of cruel Oppressors, who have made it their whole work to extirpate the true Worship and Worshippers of God out of the Land, they making it highly Criminal to own Christ as sole Supreme over his own House, to mention any Adherence to Scotland's Reformation and Covenants, and to take the written word of God to be the only rule of Faith and manners, decerning any to forefault right to Estate, Life, and Liberty, who are of Presbyterian Principles, who will not make a full surrender of Conscience unto them, to be carried about as they please, complying with all Contradictions and Contradictory Impositions which their Diabolick Spirits may invent, who are clearly seen to be void of all Religion, Reason, and Humanity; so that they proceed against all Recusants with the Height of Barbarity and Hellish Cruelty, refusing to hear them profess Subjection to Rulers only in the Lord, and according to his Word, yea cutting them off in the Fields, without giving them any Time to deliberate upon Death; yea, often times without so much as to commit their Spirits unto the Lord; but butcherously slaying them, without taking Notice what they are, or what (according to their own Law) is to be led against them. Moreover, these Arbitrarians have so raged, that they have now brought the Land to that, (O! poor miserable and lamentable Slavery) that the freest Subject, and best Gentleman in the Kingdom, is by their Acts, Laws and Proceedings holden obliged to give an Oath about Things to be ask'd, before any single Soldier or Dragoon meeting them upon the Way. Lo, all this and much more we have met with, as just upon the Lord's part, though most unjust upon Mans, for our manifold Sins and Iniquities; and in a special Manner, for our not purging our Judicatories and Armies, when the Power was in our Hands, of Men disaffected to the Cause

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and Interest of Christ ; for our bringing in known Malignants to Places of Power and Trust among us ; and for inordinate Affection unto, and lusting after the deceased Tyrant, *Charles the Second*, and advancing him to the Regal Throne, even while known by many palpable Discoveries (as to be seen in the Causes of God's Wrath with the Church of *Scotland*) to retain his Heart Enmity at the Covenanted Work of Reformation ; which Sins we desire to confess and mourn for, before God, Angels and Men : As also, our Sin in not timeous rejecting the foresaid *Charles*, when he brake Covenant, and all Parts of his Coronation Oath. Howbeit, fearing the lying under such a Sin any longer, when we were brought to a very small Remnant, we did, by open Declarations, disclaim his pretended Authority, upon many important Grounds and Reasons, as is to be seen elsewhere, particularly in our Declaration published at *Lanerk*, *January 12. 1682 Years*. All which Declarations we do hereby ratify and approve.

So now, the Lord in his Goodness and Wisdom having removed the foresaid *Charles* from his Tyranny by Death ; and a few wicked and unprincipled Men of this Kingdom having, by open Proclamation, proclaimed *James Duke of York*, though a professed Papist and excommunicate Person, and not yet received into the Church again, to be King of *Scotland, England, France and Ireland* ; We, the contending and suffering Remnant of the true Presbyterians of the Church of *Scotland*, calling to mind the many Bonds and Obligations that ly upon us from the Lord, and being desirous to be found faithful in this Day of Tentation, to avoid Accession to the Guilt in which many have involved themselves, to exoner our Consciences, as in his Sight, to testify our Resentment of the Deed, and to make it appear unto the World that we are free thereof, whether by Concurrence or Connivance ; Do here deliberately, jointly and unanimously, protest against the foresaid Proclamation of *James Duke of York*, to be King, as said is, in regard, that it is the choosing a Murderer to be a Governor, who hath shed the Blood of the Saints of GOD ; in regard that it is the Height of Confederacy with an Idolater, which is forbidden by the

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LAW of GOD; in regard that it is contrary to the Declaration of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, of the Date 27th July 1649 Tears; in regard that it is contrary to many wholesome and laudable Acts of Parliament: As Act 8th, Parliament 1st, repeated in the 99th Act, Parliament 7th, ratified in the 23d Act, Parliament 11th, 114th Act, Parliament 12th of King James VI. where Papists are decerned to be punished by manifold Civil and Ecclesiastick Pains, as Adversaries to GOD's true Religion; yea, they are ordained to be punished as common Enemies to all Christian Government; Act 8th, Parliament 16th, King James VI. And in regard that it is inconsistent with the Safety of the Faith, Conscience and Christian Liberty of a Christian People, to choose a Subject of Antichrist to be their (especially supreme) Magistrate. And so it is, that we understand that Part of the 4th Section, Chapter 23d of our Confession of Faith, and in a general and abstract Sense, where it is said (in opposition to Sectarians, who assert, that such are not lawful Kings, who either know not Christ, or believe not in him) That Infidelity or Difference in Religion doth not make void the Magistrate's just and legal Authority, nor free the People of their due Obedience to him. We acknowledge it to be true indeed, that Infidels, and these of a different Religion, are not (chiefly because such) presently to be declared no Magistrates; for a Magistrate is not a Magistrate, as a Christian, but as a Man: So it is that the Magistratical Power considered generally, given for the Good of Human Societies, may be in the Person of an Infidel, or one of a different Religion, but considered specially, given for the Good of the Church, it is only in the Person of a Professor of the true Religion. Hence, in travelling or trafficking in foreign Lands, be the Persons in whom is the Power, Infidels, or of a different Religion, we cannot refuse Subjection to their Laws, so far as they are consistent with the written Word of God, and our true Christian Liberty. Howbeit, our Covenants and Acts of Parliament have put a Bar upon the Admission of any Person, if either Infidels, or of a different Religion, while such, to govern in Scotland: and the Practice of our Church confirms it, in refusing the Crown to the late deceased Tyrant Charles II. until he subscribed such Demands as were sent unto him; and especially

upon the Admission of a known Enemy to the true Religion to govern : For it could not but be both highly sinful and irrational for us, to intrust an Enemy to the Work and People of God, with the Interest of both.

Also conceiving that this pretended Parliament is not a lawful Parliament, in regard that the Election of Commissioners is limited and prejudged, in the due Liberty thereof, by their Acts and Laws ; in regard that the Members are convicted of avowed Perjury, which, according to the *Scottish* Law, maketh a Man incapable of being so much as a Witness ; in regard they are Men of Blood, the Chief being convict of avowed Murder, whereby they are under the Lash of the Law ; and in regard of their carrying on Apostasy, and making way for the Man of Sin. We do in like manner, upon these and many other important Grounds and Reasons, protest against the Validity and Constitution of this present Parliament, as not being free and lawful ; against their assuming to themselves any Authority, or exercising any Power or Jurisdiction, for making of Acts or Laws, for judging of Causes, determining of Controversies, or proceeding in any Parliamentary Way. And in particular, we protest against their proceeding to any Approbation or Ratification of the foresaid Proclamation of *James Duke of York*, to be King, as said is ; and that they may not go on further to set the Crown upon his Head, they being incapable to give it.

And further, seeing bloody Papists, the Subjects of Antichrist, are become so hopeful, bold and confident under the Perfidy of the said *James Duke of York*, and Popery itself, so eminent, and (oh lamentable !) like to be intruded again (if God's Mercy and Power meeting together in a wonderful Way prevent it not) upon these covenanted Lands, an open Door being made thereunto by its accursed and abjured Harbinger Prelacy, which these three Kingdoms are equally sworn against. We do, in the like manner, protest against all kind of Popery in general and particular Heads, the Jurisdiction of the Pope, all the heretical and erroneous Doctrine of the Church of Rome, their tyrannous Laws made against Christian Liberty, their erroneous and bloody Decrees, their vain Ceremonies and Superstitions, their Allegories, Rites, Signs and Traditions, their Laws, Statutes, Acts, Constitutions,

tutions, Canons Civil or Municipal, with all other Ordinances and practick Penalties whatsoever, made in Prejudice of the true Religion and Professors thereof, or of the true Church-Discipline, and Jurisdiction or Freedom thereof, and every other thing contrary to sound Doctrine and the Power of Godliness, abjured most explicitly by our National Covenant, abrogated, annulled, and rescinded by our Acts of Parliament, as Act 3d, Act 31st, Parl. 1st; Act 23d, Parl. 11th; Act 114th, Parl. 12th; Act 5th, Parl. 20th, King James VI. We say, we do protest against all Kind of Popery whatsoever, against such its entering again into this Land, and against every thing that doth, or may directly or indirectly make way for the same, disclaiming likewise all Sectarianism, Malignancy, and any Confederacy therewith.

Moreover, taking to our serious Consideration, the low, deplorable and obscured State of the Churches of England and Ireland, and that we are all bound in one Covenant and Solemn League together, we (in the Bowels of Christ) do in like manner hereby admonish you our Brethren in these our Neighbour and Covenanted Lands, that ye remember how far ye have sadly failed in pursuing the Ends of our Covenants (as we ourselves also have done, which we desire to confess, imploring God's Forgiveness to you and us both) how ye have suffered your Lord's Enemies to rob you of all your Privileges and pleasant Things; how ye have given up yourselves to be seduced by complying, lukewarm and Court flattering Brethren; and how ye have passed by, lightly looking upon our bleeding Wounds, denying us Help, though we have been like to give up the Ghost; and what great Accession ye have to the giving Popery such an open Door to enter upon our Land again. Remember these Things, and consider what the Lord is now calling for at our Hand; break off your sinful Ways by Repentance, and abandon all Lukewarmness and Indifferency in the Lord's Matters, give up with your own things; be tender of God's declarative Glory, which is lying at the Stake; Quite your selves like Christians and Men; and stretch your Hands to the helping, strengthening, encouraging, and comforting a poor wasted, wronged, wounded, reproached, despised, and bleeding Remnant; (with whom
you

you are in Covenant) setting our selves against all the Injuries and Affronts done to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, against the Man of Sin, the Kingdom of Antichrist, and all the Limbs and Parts thereof. And here, with all Sincerity of Mind, and Unfeignedness of Resolution, we promise to act unto you the Parts of covenanted Brethren in the Lord, to the outmost of our Power. Likewise, we do hereby in like Manner, call unto you, all Protestant Reformed Churches, Kingdoms, and Commonwealths, that ye would take to your serious Consideration the low and dangerous State of the Gospel Interest, and advert to the Growth and Increase of Popery in all Places, bestirring yourselves timeously against it, lest ye be too late, and lose what much Blood and Contending may not recover again; considering the distressed Case whereinto we are brought, as a Share of the true Protestant Interest; and refreshing us with your Help: And withal, as ye tender the Advantage of Christ's Cause, which to own is the Christians Glory; that ye engage not yourselves in any Quarrel, or with any Person whatsoever, till you know that the Quarrel be rightly stated, and that the Persons, in the Judgment of Charity, are seeking the Advancement of the Kingdom of Christ, lest that ye join yourselves to these who may lead you back to Egypt, and so you provoke the Lord to destroy you in the Wilderness.

Finally, We being misrepresented to many, by the wicked Malice of our avowed Enemies, and the sinful Prejudice of others, who, misinterpreting our late Declaration affixed at several Parish Church Doors, (which we do hereby ratify and approve) perverting the true and obvious Sense thereof, and through blind Malice and Prejudice mistaking our Signs therein, (else their Consciences give their Tongue the Lie) hold us forth as Persons of murdering and assassinating Principles: All which Principles and Practices we do hereby declare before God, Angels and Men, that we abhor, renounce, and detest; as also, all manner of robbing of any, whether open Enemies, or others; which we are most falsely aspersed with, either in their Gold, their Silver, or their Gear, any Household-stuff. Their Money perish with

' with themselves ; the Lord knows that our Eyes are
 ' not after these Things. And, in like manner, we do
 ' hereby disclaim all unwarrantable Practices committed
 ' by any few persons reputed to be of us, whereby the
 ' Lord hath been offended, his Cause wronged, and we
 ' all made to endure the Scourge of Tongues ; for which
 ' Things we have desired to make Conscience of Mourn-
 ' ing before the Lord, both in publick and private. As
 ' the unwarrantable Manner of killing that Curate of
 ' *Carlsphairn*, (though he was a Man of Death, both by
 ' the Law of God and Man, and the Fact not materially
 ' Murder) it being gone about contrary to our Declara-
 ' tion, without Deliberation, common or competent Con-
 ' sent, (the Conclusion and Deed being known only to
 ' three or four Persons) in a rash, and not in a Christian
 ' manner. And also, other Offences being committed at
 ' the Time ; which Miscarriages have proven a Mean to
 ' stop and retard lawful, laudable, and warrantable Pro-
 ' ceedings, both as to Matter and Manner.' But let not
 guilty persons think themselves indemnified. Howbeit,
 we require and hope, that all whosoever in this our
 Land, our Neighbour or Foreign Lands, which have
 not a wilful Prejudice at the Cause and Way of God, will
 not give Ear unto Reports, which stated Enemies, or
 prejudg'd pretended Friends give of us, that they will
 not impute the Miscarriages of one or more Persons, to
 us or all of us ; who desire that nothing may be looked
 on hereafter, as our Deed, which wanteth common Con-
 sent or Approbation, and that they will not receive a
 wrong Impression of us and our Proceedings : For we
 call the Living God, the Searcher of Hearts, to witness,
 that this only is our sincere Desire, and unfeigned Reso-
 lution, to continue in the Profession and Obedience of the
 true Religion of Jesus Christ, according to his Word, our
 Covenants, National and Solemn League, to defend the
 same, and to resist all contrary Errors, Corruptions, and
 Innovations, according to our Vocation, and the outmost
 of the Power that God doth, or may put in our Hands.

Now, we hope none who have not made a full Sur-
 render of Conscience, and are not bent to welcome Pop-
 erty into the Land, will be offended at what we have
 here

here done : For, in the Lord's Sight, we durst do no less, whatever Occasion of Persecution our God's Enemies may take from the same : for we could not see, at the Time, any other Way to discharge our Duty before the Lord, to exoner our Consciences, and to free ourselves of the Connivance at Popery, which we pray the Lord may stop, and not lay the Guilt of its Increase to the Charge of us and our Posterity.

Therefore we appoint and ordain, That incontinently ye our Emissaries, pass upon the Twenty eighth Day of May, 1685 Years, unto the Market Cross of *Sanquhar*, and there, by open Proclamation, make Intimation of this our Declaration, leaving Copies of the same affix'd upon the foresaid Market Cross, and other patent Places of the foresaid Burgh.

Given at *Edinburgh* upon the 28th Day of May, 1685

Let *King JESUS* Reign, and all his Enemies be scattered.

F I N I S.

